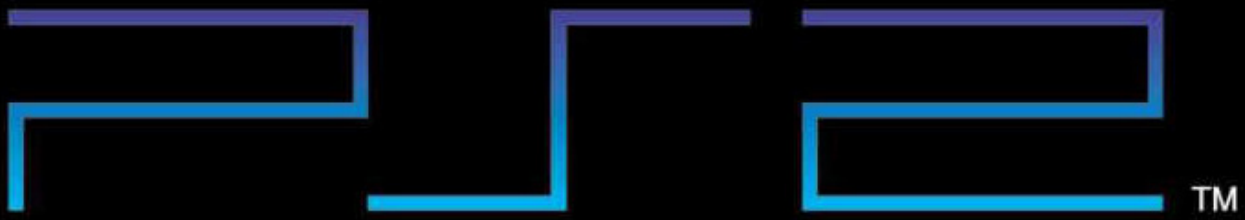


THE PlayStation®2 Encyclopedia

vol.02

E – H

copy/paste:
DaddaRuleKonge
2018

DaddaRuleKonge

This is book is made for people who collect for, or are interested in, the PlayStation 2. I made this book cause` I like to catalogue and categorize stuff, and to learn more about the system. But I am also a small time collector of the system (though the original PlayStation are (was) my primary collection).

If you are annoyed, or the owner of some of the content i used in this book, send an email to me: sennep@hotmail.com.

Similar books/PDF`s in the same format are books on NES, SNES, PSX, SMS, N64, Game&Watch, NeoGeo, including several other book in the same vein, from TMNT toys to Point and Click games.
http://daddarulekonge.itch.io/
DaddaRuleKonge.com

NoCopyright © 2018 by DaddaRuleKonge
All rights are NOT reserved. EVERY part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher. I do not own anything in this book. You use part of this publication on your OWN RISK though. As places in this book may have a copyright by the original owner.

CONTENT

You are Here

Reference Guide 7

PlayStation 2 8

Technical Specifications 15

Emotion Engine 18

PlayStation 2 Magazine Articles 22

Developers 46

PlayStation 2 Games 102

0 104
A 130
B 250
C 362
D 488

Vol.2

E 685
F 740
G 886
H 1156

Vol.3

I 1268
J 1322
K 1390
L 1536
M 1640

Vol.4

N 1940
O 2080
P 2160
Q 2300
R 2304

Vol.5

S 2496

Vol.6

T 3060
U 3300
V 3332
W 3360
X 3466
Y 3488
Z 3528

Vol.7

Software 3544
Bundles 3554
Demo 3584
Beta/Prototypes 3764
Cancelled Games 3810
Homebrew 4116

Vol.8

PlayStation 2 models 4124
Linux for PlayStation 2 4142
Peripherals 4144
Controllers 4170

Reference Guide

These are web sites that i use a lot for pictures/screenshots, reference and much of the information. If I have not used wikipedia on a game description, then I have tried to credit it at the bottom of the text.

I can recommend all of these websites, as they are very informative and fun to look through. If you are the owner of one of these sites and feel that i have done you wrong, then please send me an e-mail and i will make the necessary change to your wish.

GameFAQs

"Founded in 1995, GameFAQs has over 40000 video game FAQs, Guides and Walkthroughs, over 250000 cheat codes, and over 100000 reviews."

• Used for mostly the cover art and the review score

A giant database consisting of most games released with information, faqs and pictures.

http://www.gamefaqs.com/

Moby Games

"Metacritic aggregates music, game, tv, and movie reviews from the leading critics. "

• Used for the review score

A site that collects review scores from several review sites and user scores. A good site to get a unbiased review of a product.

http://www.metacritic.com/

Moby Games

"MobyGames is the oldest, largest and most accurate video game database for games of every platform spanning 1979-2014."

• Used for info and some pictures

A good site for information and pictures on much of the games released.

http://www.mobygames.com/

The PlayStation DataCenter!

"This site wants to be the most complete playstation one games database in the web, we got covers, screenshots, cheats, controls, game saves, descriptions, etc."

• Used for info

A giant database of information and pictures on most Ps1 & a good deal of Ps2 games. This is probably the most important tool in collecting for the PlayStation.

https://psxdatacenter.com

IGN

"IGN is your #1 destination for all video game news, expert reviews, and walkthroughs."

• Used for info a few places

It's IGN... It is what it is...

https://nordic.ign.com/

hardcoregaming101

"Our reviews and in-depth features explore all aspects of gaming. We started in 2009, with thousands of articles"

• Used for info a few places

A great site with a lot of in-depth articles about a lot of unknown game series. Highly recommended for a fun and interesting read.

http://www.hardcoregaming101.net/

demo pals

"features collector's resources to Nirvana records, survival horror games, PAL PlayStation demos, and Tomb Raider promos"

• Used for info info and pictures on some demo's

A detailed site which includes information and pictures on different demos.

https://crimson-ceremony.net/demopals/index.php

10min Gameplay

• Used for pictures

A gigantic youtube channel that show a huge amount of gameplay videos from several different consoles.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzjc5uyPodS9U9E4tpNRUw

kireev20000

"Welcome to my channel. I enjoy playing both retro and modern games. Subscribe!!"

• Used for pictures

A great dailymotion.com user that made a lot of hig-def videos showcasing gameplay videos for several Japanese games.

https://vk.com/sugarmind

Wazap!

• Used for some Japanese video game ratings

Wazap! is a vertical search engine, video game database and social networking site to distribute gaming news, rankings, cheats, downloads and reviews. It indexes gaming sites and categorizes the information as news, reviews, cheats, downloads, previews and articles.

https://jp.wazap.com/

Games of All Generations in HQ\HD Jr

"Welcome to my channel. I enjoy playing both retro and modern games. See playlist section for more games. Subscribe!!

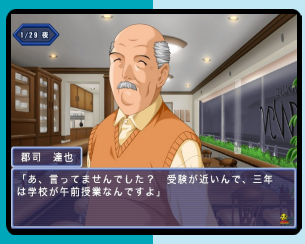
PS. Gameplay vids were captured to show game mechanics not my skill at playing particular titles - keep that in mind while watching."

• Used for pictures

https://www.youtube.com/user/RetronyashJr/

7.0

E'tude Prologue: Yureugoku Kokoro no Katachi



J

Developer	Takuyo
Publisher	Takuyo
Release date	(jp) April 27, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

While originally released in 1998 for Windows and Sega Saturn, this PlayStation 2 release came out 8 years later and contains many changes and updates. Basically, the game has been completely renewed, it contains new voice acting, new artwork, new music, and new gameplay system. The script has also been updated and extended resulting in much longer game story.

Eagle Eye Golf

5.8

Developer	Telenet Japan
Publisher	Telenet J., (eu, au) 505 Game Street, (us) Aksys
Release date	(jp) June 23, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-4 Players

Designed with the casual golf fan in mind, Eagle Eye Golf lets up to 4 players play on 7 courses in a variety of game modes such as Mission, Tournament, and team-based games. The game also features a course editor where players can recreate some of the world's most famous courses. Also included is a mission mode featuring 100 tasks to clear and a training mode where players can choose a course and set the weather and wind.

J N P

6.2

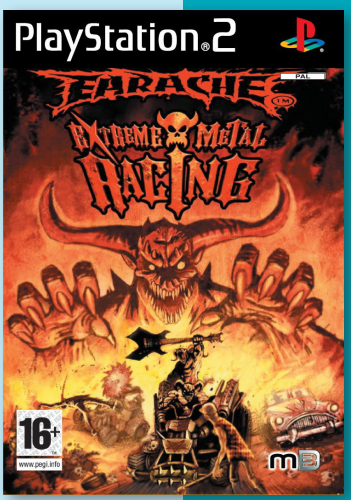
Earache Extreme Metal Racing

P

Developer	Metro3D
Publisher	Metro3D
Release date	(eu) February 2, 2007
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

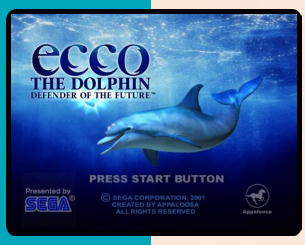
Earache: Extreme Metal Racing is a budget racing title. It incorporates an Extreme metal music soundtrack from artists signed on the Earache Records record label as players race.

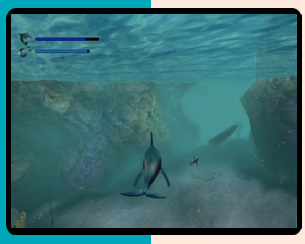
The game modes include; Single race, Time Trial, Challenge - A series of 3 successive races, Death Match - Free-for-all deathmatch, and Zombie Massacre - Players compete to destroy zombies.

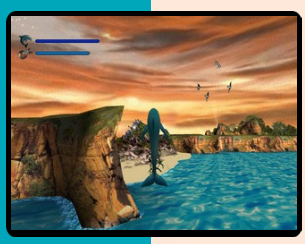


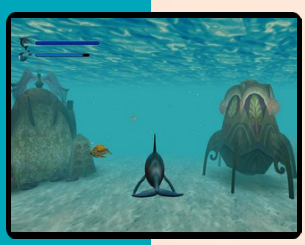
Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future

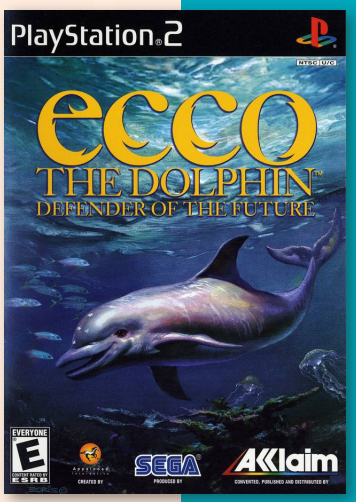
7.1

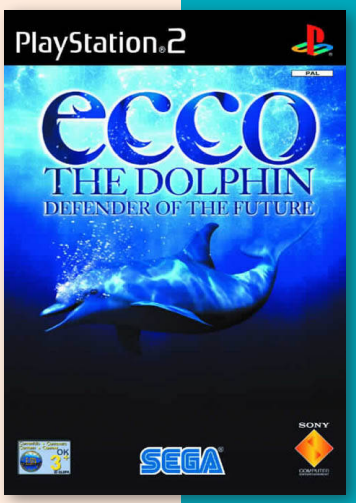




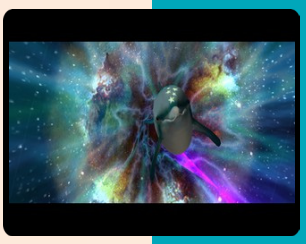








N P



Developer	Appaloosa Interactive
Publisher	SCEE, (us) Acclaim
Release date	(eu) February 22, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

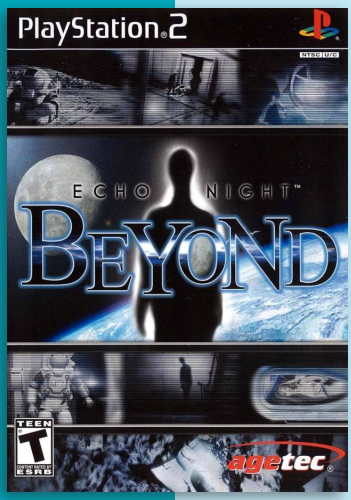
Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future is the fourth title in the Ecco the Dolphin series. It was first released in 2000 for the Dreamcast. Defender of the Future is set in a universe with a story that has no ties to the original Mega Drive/Genesis titles, hence a reboot. Despite being developed by Appaloosa Interactive (the company formerly known as Novotrade International), the team working on Defender of the Future was not the same team that worked on the Ecco games. After the Dreamcast was discontinued in the U.S., the game was re-released in 2002 for the PS2.

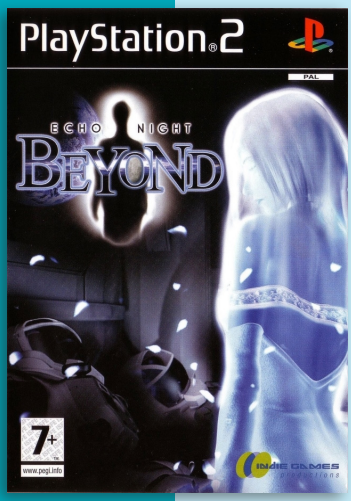
The gameplay is fairly similar to the old games, except in three dimensions. Ecco's sonar was kept as a means of interaction with other cetaceans and certain environmental objects, and a sonar map could be brought up but were often regarded as inferior to the old 2D version. The same style of movement is kept with slight alterations for the 3D environment. The control stick now only changed the direction Ecco is facing; pressing left and right changed the direction he faced horizontally, and pressing up and down changed the vertical direction. To actually move forward, the player has to tap a button to gain speed and hold the same button down to maintain it. Out of the water, Ecco can perform the purely aesthetic flips in the air just like the original games. Charging foes is kept as Ecco's standard attack, though the designers added a homing feature. The health and air meters were also kept, though the health meter can be increased by collecting power-ups called Vitalits, and the meters have a slightly different look compared to the Mega Drive games.

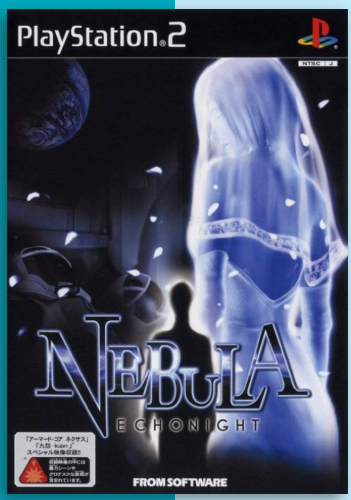
Defender of the Future continues the legacy of high difficulty set by its predecessors. The levels are again divided up, but the idea of a password system was dropped in favor of a memory card save file. The game has few loading times in the levels; the levels load all at once just before they started, and these load times could be moderately long.

Echo Night: Beyond

6.0







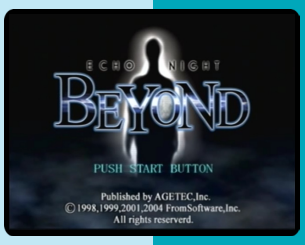
Developer	From Software
Publisher	From Software, (us) Agetec, (eu) Indie Games
Release date	(jp) January 22, 2004
Genre	Adventure, Survival horror
Mode	1 Player

Echo Night: Beyond, known in Japan as Nebula: Echo Night, is a 2004 adventure game developed by FromSoftware for the PlayStation 2. Agetec published the game in North America, with the European release, by Indie Games, following in August 2005. It is the third game in the Echo Night series.

The game tells a science fiction ghost story, set in the not-too-distant future. Players take the role of a newlywed, off for a honeymoon on the moon. The vessel crashes before reaching its lunar resort destination, however, separating the just-married couple and leaving the hero alone at an abandoned research base. Players explore the station from a first-person perspective, inside a spacesuit. In addition to the many spiritual anomalies that haunt the station, strange lunar lights and relative weightlessness add to the atmosphere of the game's environments.

Echo Night: Beyond is played from a first-person perspective, but unlike most other first-person games there is no use of firearms in the game. When confronted by a ghost the player must run before the player character's heart rate reaches a critical level; otherwise, he will die of a heart attack. There are no means of directly defending against ghosts; they must be avoided. The player's space suit is equipped with a flashlight, but must be kept charged by batteries. The ghosts can be defeated only by clearing the mist they inhabit. This is done by using a control panel to activate the ventilation system. To purify the souls of the dead, personal items important to them in life must be found and brought to them. The only exception to this is the priest ghost, who will pop out from time to time. When ghosts must be avoided, they can be spotted through the use of security monitors, which are placed throughout the station.

The game received "mixed" reviews according to Metacritic. In Japan, Famitsu gave it a score of three sevens and one six for a total of 27 out of 40.

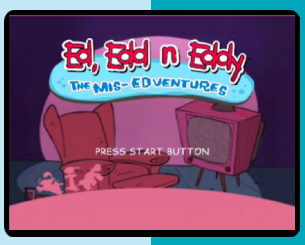


Ed, Edd n Eddy: The Mis-Edventures

5.0

Developer	Artificial Mind and Movement
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) November 3, 2005
Genre	Adventure, Platformer
Mode	1 Player

The game is a 3D platform game based on the Cartoon Network animated television series. Ed, Edd, and Eddy are playable characters in the game. Players can use them in special tag team formations like the "(Leaning-)Tower-of-Eddy" (as Eddy), "Trampol-Edd" (as Edd), and "Batter-Ed(-Ram)" (as Ed) to complete eight levels, referred to as scams.



N P

Edel Blume

8.3

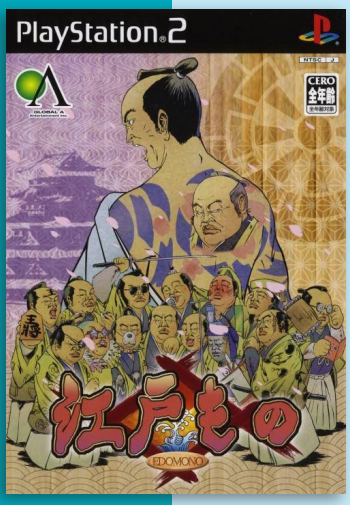
J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) April 24, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Edel Blume is a visual novel that takes place in a European gothic fantasy world with death and rebirth as its theme. The game centers around the orphan Meary who was brought up by nuns in the village's convent.

The Limited Edition was released in a box that includes the game, a comical drama CD and an Art book that carries character settings information.

Edomono



Developer	Global A
Publisher	Global A
Release date	(jp) July 7, 2005
Genre	Strategy, Simulation
Mode	1 Player

Edomono is a Japanese-themed simulation game where players build an a town and take part in simulation-style battles. This title is set in Japan's Edo era. Players take the role of Kinzou Toriyama and have just received orders to restore an Edo town. Defeating attacking beasts earns players money which can be used to help make their town prosperous. When beasts attack, the game becomes a grid-based strategy title.

J

7.1

Ef - a fairy tale of the two.

J

Developer	Comfort
Publisher	Comfort
Release date	(jp) April 29, 2010
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Ef: A Fairy Tale of the Two is originally a two-part Japanese adult visual novel series by Minori for Windows.

The gameplay requires little interaction from the player as most of the duration of the game is spent simply reading the text that appears on the screen which represents either dialogue between the various characters or the inner thoughts of the protagonist. The player has a chance to assume the role of four protagonists, two in each Ef: The First Tale and Ef: The Latter Tale. Each protagonist is paired with a heroine, and each scenario in the original PC versions of the visual novels includes scenes with sexual content. These scenes are removed or modified in the PlayStation 2 port.

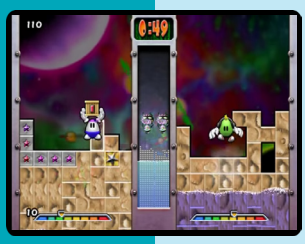
Every so often, players will come to a point where they is given the chance to choose from multiple options. There are four main plot lines that the player will have the chance to experience, one for each of the heroines in the story. The plot lines carry on from each other in a linear fashion. The game can end prematurely if the player makes the wrong decisions. When this occurs, the player must go back to a previously saved spot and choose different decisions.

The English Windows version of the two games were released in 2012 and 2013.

First Print Limited Special Edition

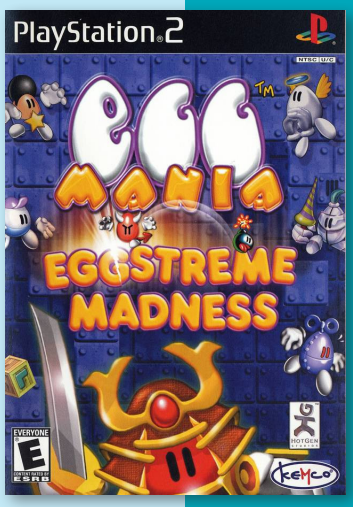
6.4

Egg Mania: Eggstreme Madness



J N P

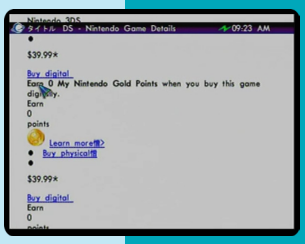
Developer	Kemco
Publisher	Kemco
Release date	(jp) September 12, 2002
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1-2 Players



In Egg Mania: Eggstreme Madness, players must build a tower from falling puzzle pieces to reach a balloon basket high above. The tower must be strong and stable, or it will collapse on itself back into the water below. Also, several enemies randomly appear, some stealing the players crates, and some dragging them into the water. There are also items in bubbles that give players a power-up or help to destroy an opponent's towers.

EGBrowser

Developer	Planet Web
Publisher	Ergo Soft
Release date	(jp) April 12, 2001
Genre	Miscellaneous
Mode	1 Player



EGBrowser, made by Planetweb and Ergosoft (the latter a subsidiary of software developer/publisher Koei), was the only official web browser for the PlayStation 2. The browser allowed PS2 owners with third-party USB modems (such as Sun Denshi's OnlineStation, among others) to download web content by way of their PS2s.

EGBrowser supports USB keyboards, mice, and printers for a more effective interface with the Internet, and is optimized to produce easily-read text for a television display.

Ergosoft also planned to license elements of its technology to game developers and multimedia creators, so as to enable web access and other online features in their games.
The different releases supported different network devices.

EGBrowser

EGBrowser BB

EGBrowser Light For I-O Data Device Inc.

7.8

Eien no Aseria: The Spirit of Eternity Sword

Developer	Xuse
Publisher	Nippon Ichi Software
Release date	(jp) May 12, 2005
Genre	Role-playing, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

Aselia the Eternal combines strategy gameplay with a fantasy storyline. Players travel to a fantasy world and lead an army of girls in battle against powerful enemies. The game feature dozens of missions, hundreds of skills, three difficulty levels, and eight endings.

The PS2 game was (back)ported to Windows in 2008 and had an English release.

7.8

Eikan wa Kimini 2002: Koushien no Kodou

Developer	DigiCube
Publisher	DigiCube
Release date	(jp) July 18, 2002
Genre	Sports, Simulation
Mode	1-2 Players

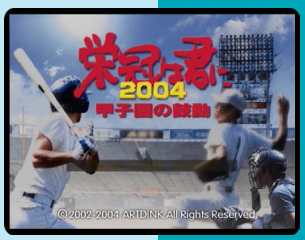
Eikan wa Kimini 2002: Koushien no Kodou is a high school baseball club development simulation. Players can chooses one of about 4,000 high schools nationwide and will be assigned as the manager of the baseball club. Within the time limit of 10 years, players aim to win the national tournament by training members.

Eikan wa Kimini 2004: Koushien no Kodou

8.1

Developer	Artdink
Publisher	Artdink
Release date	(jp) July 15, 2004
Genre	Sports, Simulation
Mode	1-2 Players

Eikan wa Kimini 2004: Koushien no Kodou is another game in the school baseball club development simulation series. Players will be the director of a high school baseball club, and grow the baseball club, aiming to win the Koshien spring and summer which is the summit of 4119 schools.



7.4

Eikan wa Kimini: Koushien e no Michi

Developer	Artdink
Publisher	Artdink
Release date	(jp) July 27, 2000
Genre	Sports, Simulation
Mode	1-2 Players

This entry in the series lets players once again become the supervisor of a high school baseball team. Players must nurture players and aim for the Koshien victory within 7 years. The game include the 1999 data of 4096 schools nationwide participating in the nationwide high school baseball championships.

Eikan wa Kimini: Koushien no Hasha

7.3

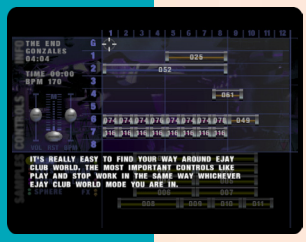
Developer	Artdink
Publisher	Artdink
Release date	(jp) August 2, 2001
Genre	Sports, Simulation
Mode	1-2 Players

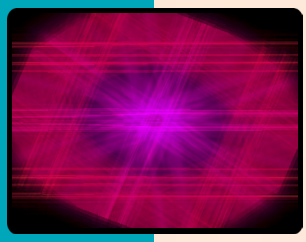
This is another entry in the Eikan wa Kimini series. Players once again take the role of a supervisor of a high school baseball team. The goal in this game is, as in all the others, to become "champion of the Koshien".

J

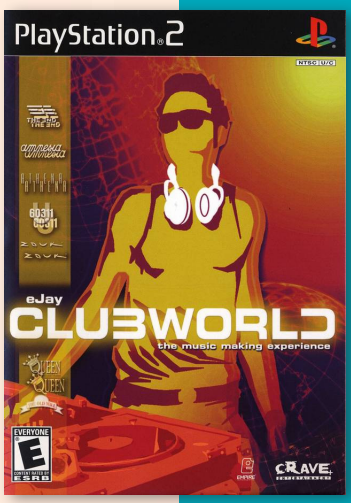
EJay Clubworld

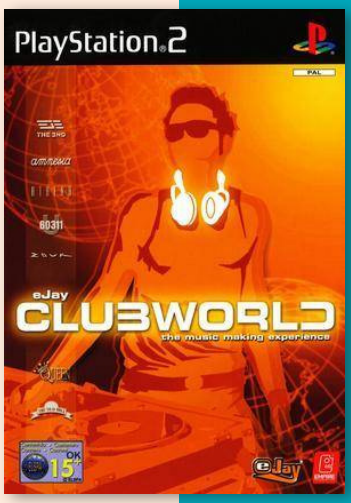
6.9





Developer	UDS
Publisher	Empire Interactive, (us) Crave
Release date	(eu) August 30, 2002
Genre	Music, Miscellaneous
Mode	1-2 Players





eJay is a series of musical arrangement software and games, primarily for Windows. The first edition, Dance eJay, was released in 1997. Since the original Dance eJay, there have been many releases catering to different music genres and users, including techno and hip-hop, as well as a PS2 edition.

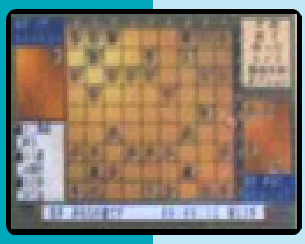
eJay ClubWorld lets players to create their own hit music without any musical training. Eight real world clubs and locations are available, each with a different music style. Over 10.000 royalty-free samples from House, Hip Hop, Trance, Ambient, Drum & Bass, Acid & Electro, Reggae and Techno are available for players to choose from and can be mixed using an intuitive interface. In addition, a synthesizer, a drum machine and a virtual turntable lets players create their own unique sounds. There is also a Video Mode that visualizes their musical creation. Also, up to four players can simultaneously participate in a Live Jam session, where each player controls an instrument.

In 2010, three eJay products were reissued in editions: Hip Hop 5, Dance 6 and DJ Mixstation 4, with Hip Hop 5 and Dance 6 now having twice the number of sound samples than they had originally. Also on the same date, a new software called Video & Music Exchange was released.

N P

Eisei Meijin IV

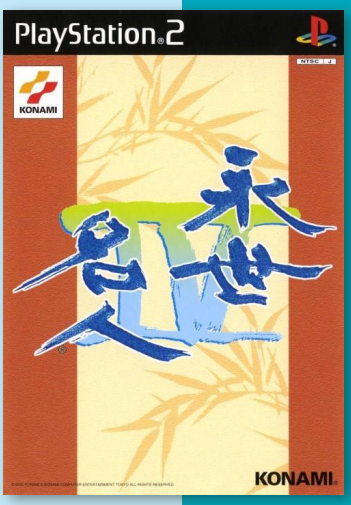
8.0



J

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) April 13, 2000
Genre	Board
Mode	1 Player

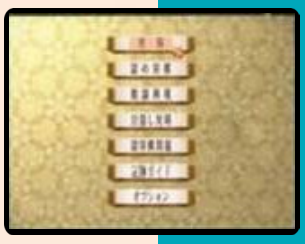
Eisei Meijin IV is the first PlayStation 2 game in Yoshimura Nobuhiro's line of Shogi games. Developed by the team at Konami Tokyo, EM4 adds several new features not previously available in the franchise's earlier versions, like the broader range of CPU tactics, more than 100,000 possible hands, and a built-in tutorial system that can be adjusted to fit your play style. The game was only available only in Japan.



Eisei Meijin V

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 29, 2001
Genre	Board
Mode	1 Player

Eisei Meijin V is the fifth game in the Shogi series. The game was developed and released by Konami and was only released in Japan. The game is similar as the other entries in the series.



J

Eisei Meijin VI

7.6

J

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) February 28, 2002
Genre	Board
Mode	1 Player

Eisei Meijin VI is another entry in the shogi series. New to this game was the option to play over the internet. To play online, players had to to join the "Internet Shogi Dojo" operated by Shogi Club 24. Players could play against other members and professional shogi players connected at the same time.

The AI in this version was also updated and made more difficult compared to the previous games.

Eisei Meijin VII

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 13, 2003
Genre	Board
Mode	1-2 Players

Eisei Meijin VII for the PlayStation 2 had a higher difficulty and AI compared to the earlier entries. The game feature difficulty modes from beginners to advanced players. The game also feature the online ability that was included in the sixth release in the series. The game feature the inclusion of a "Impression Battle" mode.

J

6.2

El Tigre: The Adventures of Manny Rivera

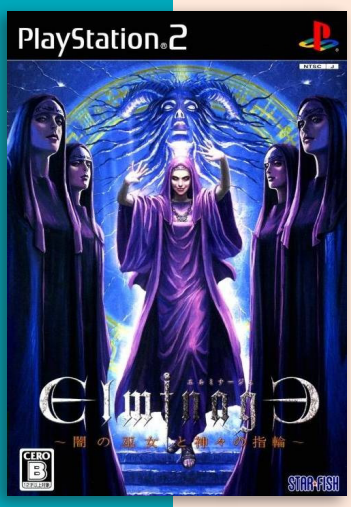
N P

Developer	Blue Tongue Entertainment
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) October 29, 2007
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

El Tigre is a side-scrolling platform game based on the Nickelodeon cartoon series of the same name. The main gameplay element is platforming which involves actions such as jumping across gaps, balancing on moving terrain and collecting Macho Tokens to unlock a bonus costume and bonus downhill-shopping cart levels.

"mobygames.com"

Elminage: Yami no Miko to Kamigami no Yubiwa



Developer	Opera House
Publisher	Starfish SD
Release date	(jp) March 27, 2008
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

This game was the first game in the Elminage series of Japanese fantasy role-playing games. The games are dungeon crawlers in the tradition of the Wizardry series of games.

The game allows players to choose among nine races and 16 different job classes, when creating their party of choice. Afterwards, 15 dungeons with various traps and monsters await.

6.8

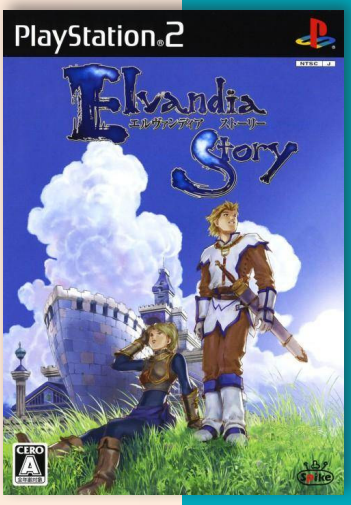
J

Elvandia Story

6.5

J

Developer	Spike
Publisher	Spike
Release date	(jp) April 26, 2007
Genre	Tactical role-playing
Mode	1 Player



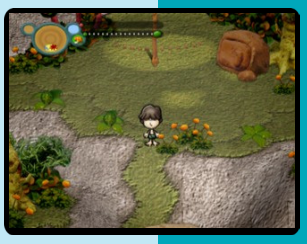
Elvandia Story is a tactical role-playing game for the PlayStation 2. The game features high resolution 2D sprites. The game's battle format has been compared to Fire Emblem, in which the camera switches perspective to a 3/4 overhead view of one-on-one combat. The music is composed by Norihiko Hibino. The main musical theme for Elvandia Story, titled "Lion no Tsubasa", was sung by Chihiro Yonekura.

The story revolves around Ashley, son of a Lord from the State of Kastol, who recently returned to his home town. While he is with his friends, he receives a message that the neighbouring State of Lumen is under attack from the north by the troops of Genes. He decides to stop Genes and starts his journey to Lumen in order to end the fight and restore peace on the continent.

Endnesia

7.1

Developer	Vanpool
Publisher	Enix Corporation
Release date	(jp) May 31, 2001
Genre	Adventure, Simulation
Mode	1 Player



J

Endonesia, sometimes Endnesia or Exotica, is an adventure game for the PlayStation 2. The game was released exclusively in Japan.

The player takes on the role of a 5th-grade boy who is accidentally warped to a island called Endonesia. The protagonist must communicate with the island's 50 sealed gods in order to return home. The boy does so by obtaining several abilities called Emo powers, which draw on his emotions, and the emotions of those around him. The game features day and night cycles as well as days of the week, with the island stuck in a 10-day time loop.

The game's instruction manual was made similar to a travel pamphlet. Titled Endonesia Airlines, it includes a map, photographs of food and wildlife from the game, and letter of welcome to the island.

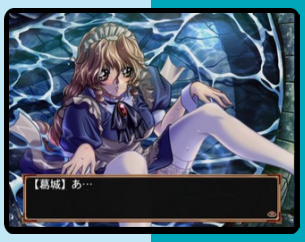
Elysion

7.5

Developer	Terios
Publisher	NEC Interchannel
Release date	(jp) May 1, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

In this game, a codger lives on an island in a manse near the ocean. He's reclusive, private, and very wealthy. As the family physician, the player are summoned to the island to care for the old man. The premise of the game introduction seems innocent and routine enough but the various characters the player meet arouse suspicion and suspense amongst the different players inside the mansion.

"psxdatacenter.com"



J

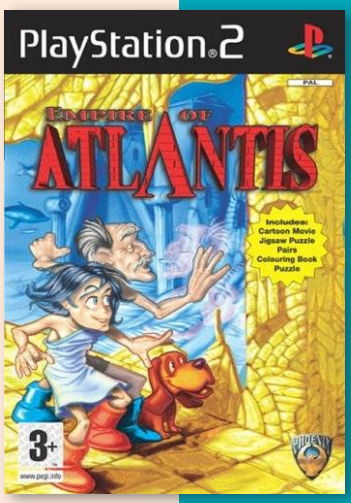
Empire of Atlantis

7.0

P

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2006
Genre	Mini-games
Mode	1 Player

Empire of Atlantis is a Phoenix game, which was released in Europe in 2006. The game follow the same formula as most of the games released by Phoenix Game, like Animal Soccer World and Cartoon Kingdom. The game include a few puzzle type games and a Dingo cartoon.



Endgame

5.7

Developer	Cunning Developments
Publisher	Empire Interactive
Release date	(eu) May 31, 2002
Genre	Light-gun
Mode	1-2 Players

Endgame is an futuristic action light-gun shooter which similar to the Time Crisis series. The game is played out in five chapters, all of which are timed. Jade will trek through exotic European locales (including the Swiss Alps and the London Underground), shooting enemies and bosses. The faster players shoot each wave of enemies the better, as the time saved is added to the next chapter.

"mobygames.com"

J N P

Energy Airforce

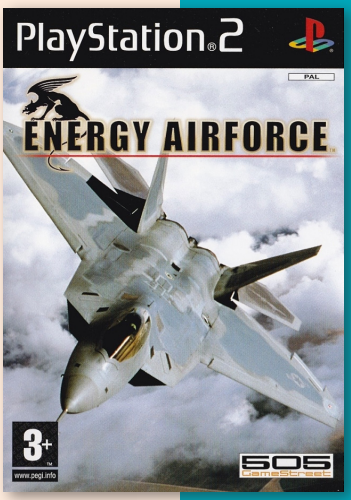
8.0

J P

Developer	Taito Corporation
Publisher	Taito Corporation, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) September 26, 2002
Genre	Action, Simulation
Mode	1 Player

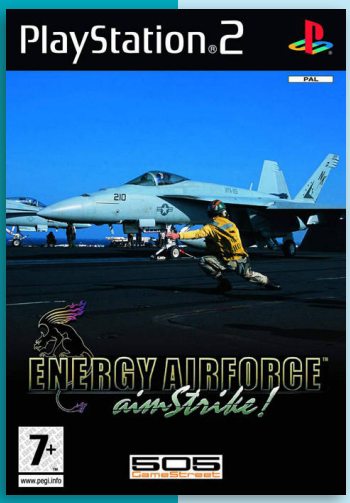
Energy Airforce is a realistic flight simulator where players can pilot several real-life military aircraft such as the F/A-22 Raptor, F-16 Fighting Falcon, and X-35 JSF. It takes a similar approach as racing simulator Gran Turismo, requiring the player to train and pass license tests before more advanced missions and aircraft are unlocked, as only the F-16 is unlocked at the start. However, there are also free Dogfight and Arcade modes.

"mobygames.com"



Energy Airforce: Aim Strike!

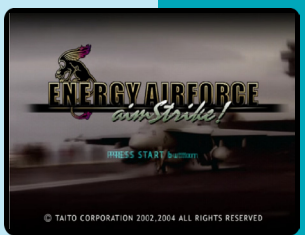
8.6



Developer	Taito Corporation
Publisher	Taito Corporation, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) October 2, 2003
Genre	Action, Simulation
Mode	1 Player

The second title in Taito's military flight sim series is greatly expanded over its predecessor. Several new types of aircraft have been added, including the F/A-18 Super Hornet, F-15 Eagle, and A-10 Thunderbolt II, and the need to pass license tests to unlock aircraft has been removed.

As before, the game includes a wide range of missions, including both air-to-air and air-to-surface missions.



J P

England International Football

7.1

P

Developer	Codemasters
Publisher	Codemasters
Release date	(eu) April 30, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

This is the only official game of the England soccer team and developed by the makers of the Club Football series, Kuju Entertaiment. The game allows the players to play for England as their official team. The goal in this game is to lead the England team squad to the international victory. As the official England football game, it features all the 25 members of the England's team including their Swedish coach.

Enter the Matrix

6.2

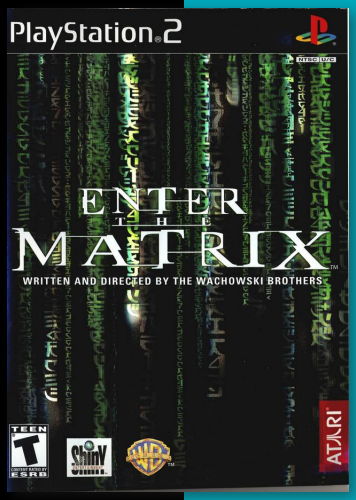
Developer	Shiny Entertainment
Publisher	Atari, (jp) Bandai
Release date	(us) May 14, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

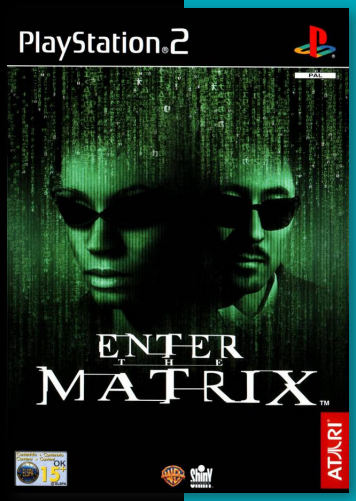
Enter the Matrix was the first game based on The Matrix series of films. Its story is concurrent with that of The Matrix Reloaded, and features over an hour of original footage, directed by The Wachowskis and starring the cast of the film trilogy, produced for the game.

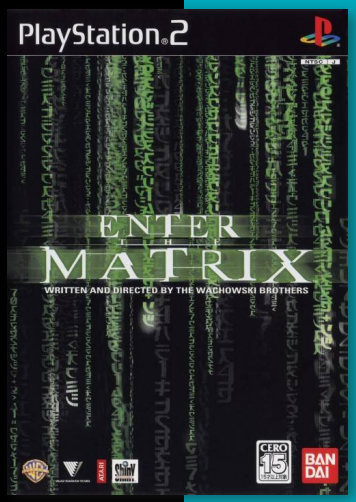
Enter the Matrix gives players control of two of the supporting characters from Reloaded and Revolutions, Ghost (Anthony Wong) and Niobe (Jada Pinkett-Smith), members of the same group of rebels as Morpheus, Trinity, and Neo, the protagonists of the series. Niobe is the Captain of the Logos, the fastest ship in the rebel fleet. Ghost is the ship's first mate, weapons guru, and a deep-thinking, philosophical assassin. The game takes place at roughly the same time as the events in Reloaded.

Players play as either Niobe or Ghost, each of whom have slight variations during their story. Most levels involve controlling players in a third-person perspective, using guns and fighting skills to defeat opponents and complete level objectives. At any time, players can activate bullet time which slows down time, giving players the ability to perform actions such as shooting in midair and dodging bullets. Some levels involve one on one martial arts fighting against single opponents. In levels involving vehicles, such as driving a cars or piloting the Logos, the style of gameplay depends on the selected player, with Niobe maneuvering the vehicles to avoid obstacles, whilst Ghost takes control of a gun to fight off incoming enemies. A hacking system allows players to enter codes, which can unlock special skills, weapons and secrets, such as a 2-player versus mode.

By July 2006, the PlayStation 2 version of Enter the Matrix had sold 1.2 million copies and earned $58 million in the United States. Next Generation ranked it as the 39th highest-selling game launched for the PlayStation 2, Xbox or GameCube between January 2000 and July 2006 in that country. Combined sales of Enter the Matrix console releases reached 1.9 million units in the United States by July 2006.







J N P

Enthusia Professional Racing

7.0

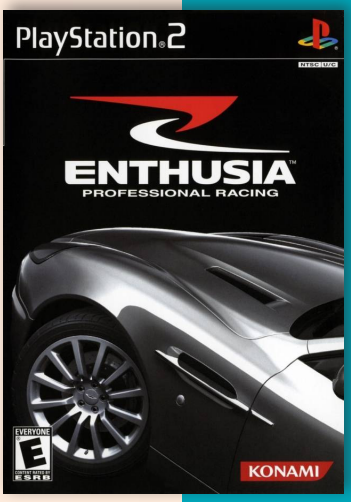
J N P

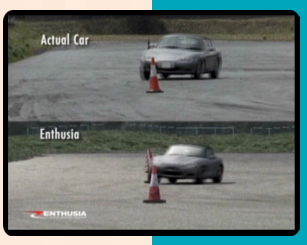
Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 17, 2005
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Enthusia: Professional Racing is a driving simulation that features hundreds of licensed vehicles from dozens of various manufacturers. The cars vary in type, class, and time periods, so players can find some old timers as well as family cars and test them on the given tracks, race against another player in split-screen mode, or play the Enthusia Life mode and fill in the garage, or try the Driving Revolution to tune up their driving skills.

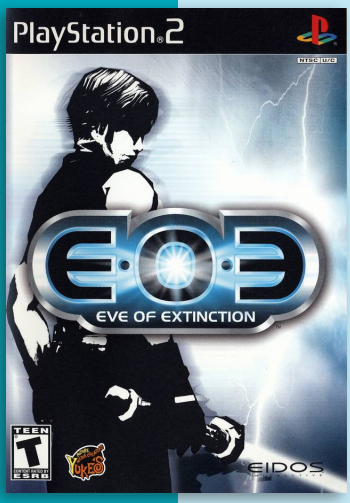
Players can drive in first-person view or looking at the car from the typical back third-person view, with some extras, such as the VGS (Visual Gravity System) which provides detailed information about car handling and tire traction. The cars in this game are true to their physics, more than 300 different physics parameters were reproduced for every car.

"mobygames.com"





EOE: Eve of Extinction



Developer	Yuke's
Publisher	Eidos Interactive, (jp) Titus Software
Release date	(us) February 26, 2002
Genre	Beat 'em up
Mode	1 Player

EOE: Eve of Extinction is a beat 'em up released exclusively for PlayStation 2. Players take the role of a man named Josh (voiced by Cam Clarke) trying to save his girlfriend Elliel after she was transformed into a weapon called Legacy by the corporation known as Wisdom.

Progression through levels is achieved through platforming using a bo stick, hitting levers, and killing enemies. The player can string together a series of combos by using different forms of the Legacy weapon that Josh wields, and can switch types of the weapon using the L1 and R1 buttons. Switching to different types of weapons during combos will increase the length of the combos and cause them to do more damage.

The game was met with mixed reception, with reviewers praising the combat but criticizing the graphics and camera.

5.7

J N P

Ephemeral Fantasia

4.8

Developer	KCEJ
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) August 10, 2000
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Ephemeral Fantasia features traditional role-playing video game turn-based battles, with a variety of playable characters and skills. Additionally, there is a guitar minigame that can be played several times throughout the course of the story.

Ephemeral Fantasia is similar to The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask in that the story transpires over a constantly looping period of five days. This is caused by a time loop created by the main antagonist, Xelpherpolis. In order for the time loop to be halted, Mouse must travel through the same five days multiple times.

The game follows Mouse, who has been summoned by a powerful figure on a remote island to compose a song. Xelpherpolis invites Mouse to play at his wedding, no doubt because of his fame as an excellent musician. Of course, Xelpherpolis doesn't expect him to solve the mystery of the island and free its inhabitants.

It was originally to be released on the Sega Dreamcast. An interview with development team member Makoto "M2" Moribe in Famitsu reveals that additional content planned for the Dreamcast version was cut when the game was moved to PS2. The Dreamcast version of Ephemeral Fantasia was to feature cameos by different Sega characters.

J N P

Erde: Nezu no Izuki no Shita de

6.6

J

Developer	Kid
Publisher	Kid
Release date	(jp) December 19, 2002
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Erde is a romance visual novel adventure game set in a near future with a slight fantasy elements. The gameplay, like in most visual novels, consists of reading through descriptions and dialogues. The protagonist of the game is a village boy named Takumi. The game settings consist of an actual world which is set around the village Takumi lives in, and a virtual world which can be accessed using special bed-like terminals.

5.1

Eragon

Developer	Stormfront Studios
Publisher	Sierra Entertainment
Release date	(us) November 14, 2006
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1-2 Players

The game is based upon the Eragon film, which is loosely based on the book Eragon, by Christopher Paolini. In the game the player takes on the role of the protagonist from the book and film and occasionally controls his dragon Saphira.

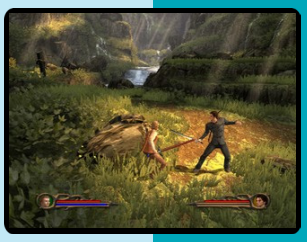
The majority of the game is taken up by third-person combat, usually on foot. At the start of the game the player can use four "combo" attacks. Additionally, they can use three basic magic attacks: magic push/pull (Thrysta Vindr), magic shield (Skölir), and magic fire (Brisingr). These three magic attacks can be utilised in different ways (for example, Brisingr arrows, or throwing spears in baskets magically).

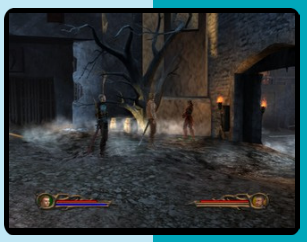
Some missions permit the player to use the dragon Saphira in combat. The gameplay mechanics within these levels are largely similar to those in ground-based levels, with the exception of some different attack moves (such as tail attacks). Protagonist Eragon sits on Saphira's back during these sections, and can be made to fire magic arrows. The player has no choice as to whether or not they use Saphira. Similarly, the player cannot use Saphira in ground-based levels: they can call for her and she will swoop past, but it is not possible to use this feature to ride Saphira. There is a multiplayer co-op mode which allows two people to play through the main storyline.

The console and PC versions of the game are very similar, focusing on the same style of gameplay. However, the Xbox 360 edition features two exclusive levels. One is on foot as Eragon, and Saphira is controlled in the second mission.

The game has received generally negative reviews, (45-55 out of 100) according to Metacritic and GameRankings.

GameSpot rated the game 4.2 out of 10, and GameSpy gave it a similar score of 2 out of 5. PC Gamer UK slated the PC version of the game, describing the plot as *"thinner than hospital undies"*, complaining about the tedious and repetitive side-scrolling action. They ended up summarising it as *"a profoundly uninspiring tie-in"* and gave it 53%.



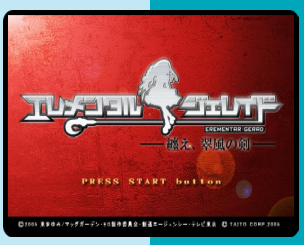


Erementar Gerad

6.4

Developer	Taito Corporation
Publisher	Taito Corporation
Release date	(jp) June 30, 2005
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

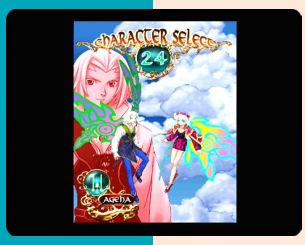
The game is based on the Erementar Gerad manga/anime property. Game modes include Story, Arcade, Training, and an unlockable Gallery mode. In the Story Mode, Coud and Ren face various challengers in an 3D cel-shaded fighting game featuring seven characters/groups and two unlockable characters. It features standard attack moves as well as special attacks that are activated by holding the R2 trigger and a face button.

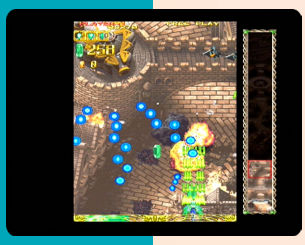


J

Espgaluda

7.2



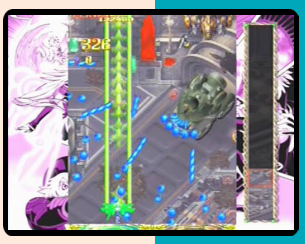


J

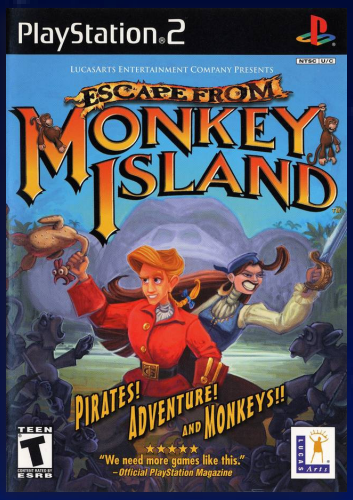
Developer	Cave
Publisher	Arika
Release date	(jp) June 17, 2004
Genre	Shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

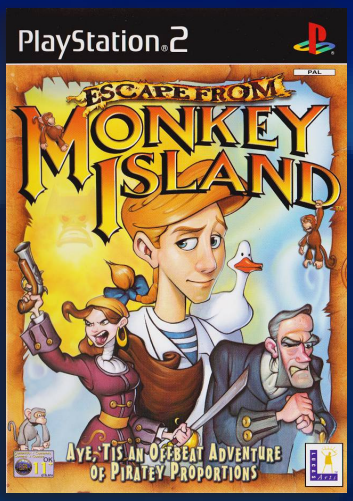
Espgaluda is a vertically scrolling shooter. Players are given the option of controlling one of two siblings, Ageha (faster but with narrower shooting capabilities) or Tateha (slower but with a wider attack). As they fly through the various stages various mechanical enemies attack with a very significant number of bullets, often nearly filling the screen. Aside from the regular shots, Ageha and Tateha also have additional abilities which help the player navigate through the numerous bullets. The first is a guard barrier; when activated the player is immune to collisions and as a bonus when the barrier button is released a more powerful laser shot is fired. A meter at the bottom of the screen indicates how much power is left in the barrier. The second ability is called the Kakusei mode; when this mode is activated the character switches sex and is able to fire a more powerful shot. More importantly, when this mode is activated all of the enemies and their bullets slow down considerably while the players speed remains the same making it easier to navigate through a tricky pattern of bullets. Activating Kakusei mode will rapidly deplete the players supply of green gems; since the number of gems isn't limitless the player may not be able to remain in Kakusei mode for long.

"mobygames.com"



8.4





Escape from Monkey Island

Developer	LucasArts
Publisher	LucasArts
Release date	(us) June 18, 2001
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Escape from Monkey Island is the fourth game in the Monkey Island series and the first one to use 3D graphics. The game was originally released on Windows with a port on PS2 later released.

The game centers on the pirate Guybrush Threepwood, who returns home with his wife Elaine Marley after their honeymoon, to find her erroneously declared dead, and her office of governor up for election. Guybrush must find a way to restore Elaine to office, while uncovering a plot to turn the Caribbean into a tourist trap, headed by his nemesis LeChuck and an Australian conspirator Ozzie Mandrill.

Escape from Monkey Island is an adventure game that consists of dialogue with characters and solving puzzles. The game is controlled with the joystick, making it the only non-point-and-click game in the Monkey Island series.

A feature of the game are action-lines: Guybrush will glance at any items that can be interacted with; the player can use 'Page Up' or 'Page Down' to select the item that he wants Guybrush to look at.

One of the hallmark aspects of the Monkey Island games, the insult swordfighting — the sword duels which were won by knowing the appropriate insults and responses — is briefly touched upon in the game as "insult armwrestling", and in an unwinnable insult duel against Ozzie Mandrill. In the second part of the game, the insult games are replaced by "Monkey Kombat", the name being a parody of Mortal Kombat with a symbol to match. Monkey Kombat is a subgame akin to rock-paper-scissors, where the player needs to memorize lines of "monkey insults and retorts" which consist of per-game randomized compositions of "monkey words" like "oop", "chee", "ack" and "eek".

The game was made with Sean Clark and Michael Stemmle as lead designers, both of whom worked on LucasArts' previous adventure titles Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis and Sam & Max Hit the Road. Sean Clark also worked on Loom and The Dig. Escape uses a slightly improved version of the GrimE engine introduced by Grim Fandango. Compared to the rest of the series, the SCUMM scripting language was replaced by the Lua programming language (This is referenced in-game; the SCUMM Bar, which first appeared in The Secret of Monkey Island, has been replaced in Escape with the tropical-themed Lua Bar).

A new version of the iMUSE interactive music system incorporating MP3 compression, among other changes, was built and used for the game. Interactive programming of the music and ambiance streams in the iMUSE system was done by lead sound designer Larry the O. Escape's introductory music is identical to that of the third game, unlike the earlier sequels which featured newly composed remixes of the well-known Monkey Island theme. Clint Bajakian, who had previously been an additional composer on Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge, acted as the game's main composer, with additional tracks by Michael Land (who

had been the lead composer on the previous three Monkey Island games), Peter McConnell, Anna Karney, and Michael Lande (not to be confused with Michael Land).

The voice cast saw the return of Dominic Armato as Guybrush, Earl Boen as LeChuck, Leilani Jones Wilmore as the Voodoo Lady and Denny Delk as Murray. The only major voice not to return was Alexandra Boyd who voiced Elaine in the previous game. She was replaced by Charity James. Stan is also voiced by a different actor, Pat Fraley. Additionally, characters who had previously appeared in The Secret of Monkey Island such as Carla, Otis and Herman Toothrot, are heard with voice actors for the first time.

The game was also released on PlayStation 2 in 2001. Apart from obvious control differences, the PS2 version only varies by a slightly higher polygon count and use of less pre-rendered material. Escape is the third LucasArts adventure game to have a console release, following The Secret of Monkey Island for the Sega CD and Maniac Mansion for the NES.

According to Heinrich Lenhardt of PC Gamer US, *"[I]f it wasn't for the sales figures in Germany, LucasArts probably wouldn't have bothered doing another Monkey Island"* after The Curse of Monkey Island.

The game was met with a generally favorable reception. The gameplay received criticism for its interface and the difficulty of keyboard or joystick control as compared to mouse controls. The "Monkey Kombat" was also criticized, with the GameSpot review stating that *"unfortunately Monkey Kombat may be the single biggest problem with Escape from Monkey Island"*. Another reviewer speculated that *"Perhaps the designers figured that combining insult fighting, cute monkeys, and a Mortal Kombat spoof would work well, but it didn't."*

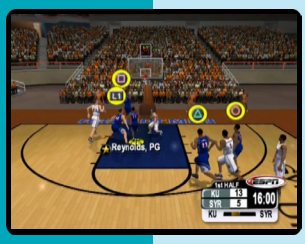
PC Zone gave it 82% and called it *"an enjoyable, professionally created and amiably funny game. It doesn't do anything startlingly new, but is still an essential title for the hordes of people who grew up playing adventures."* Adventure Gamers gave it four stars out of five and called it *"a quality adventure game even though the restyling of the old locations on Mêlée Island and Monkey Island is a bit of a mixed bag. The ending is long, satisfying and almost as disturbingly weird as the ending of LeChuck's Revenge (but without being such an anti-climax)."* Playboy gave the PS2 version a score of 85% and said that it *"captures aging Marx Brothers appeal, but does so with modern-day flair. From battles against undead cutthroats to talking skulls, voodoo women and Monkey Kombat mini-games, you'll never know what to expect next. Then again, provided it's good times that come to mind, you won't be far off the mark. So set a course for the local retailer ASAP, matey - your ship's just come in."* Maxim, however, gave the same version six out of ten and said, *"If you're keen on tasteless, tongue-in-cheek jokes, smooth sailing lies ahead."*

CNET Gamecenter named Escape from Monkey Island the best adventure game of 2000. The editors wrote, *"We can't imagine a better graphic adventure."* It was also nominated in the publication's overall game of the year category, which went to The Sims. The editors of Computer Games Magazine nominated Escape from Monkey Island for their 2000 "Adventure Game of the Year" award.

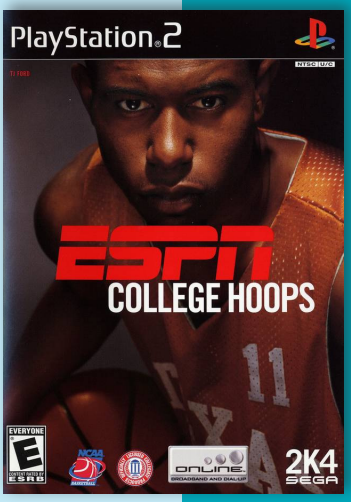
It also earned the E3 2000 Game Critics Awards for "Best Action/Adventure Game".

8.3

ESPN College Hoops

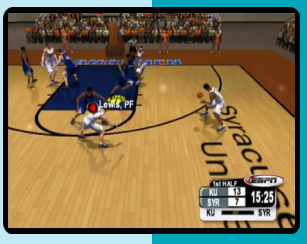


Developer	Visual Concepts
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) November 13, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (10) Players



ESPN College Hoops is the second of Sega's college basketball games and follow-up to NCAA 2K3, to which it adds several new gameplay modes and other enhancements. It also carries over several of ESPN NBA Basketball's improvements in controls and graphics.

Returning game modes include Quick Play, Exhibition, Season, Legacy, Tournament, Practice and Gym Rat. The Legacy mode has redesigned menus and adds full season recruiting via assistant coaches, scout visits of high school games and a new trophy room. New modes include Rival mode, which lets players set up quick games that feature classic school rivalries, and Slam Dunk Challenge. The Challenge offers five different dunk competitions: Beat the Clock, Style, Horse, Dunk-O-War and a Championship of all modes. Dunks are executed through QTE-style pressing of buttons in the correct order in quick succession. Players can create their own schools in the new Create-A-School mode, allowing for customization of mascot, fight song and even floor type.



On the court, major changes include IsoMotion controls similar to those seen in ESPN NBA, which allow a variety of new offensive moves and manual stealing on defense through use of the right thumbstick.

"mobygames.com"

8.6

ESPN College Hoops 2K5

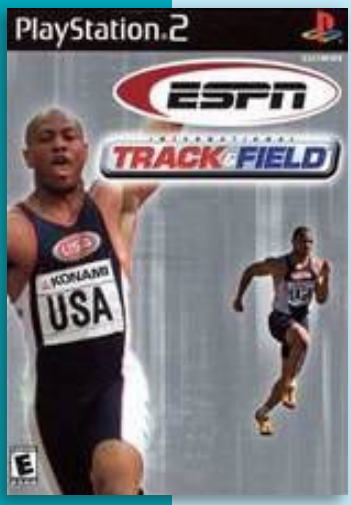
Developer	Visual Concepts
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) November 17, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (10) Players

College Hoops 2K5 offers a comprehensive college basketball experience. Players go through Legacy Mode to bring a small college respect and eventually earn a job with a major program. It features former Stanford and current Sydney Kings forward Josh Childress on the cover.

The game was met with positive reception upon release. GameRankings and Metacritic gave it a score of 84.98% and 86 out of 100.

ESPN International Track & Field

7.2



Developer	KCEO
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) August 31, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

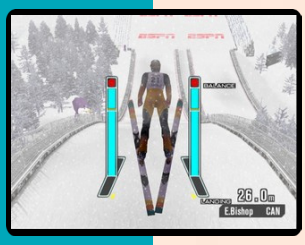
Players can compete in twelve international track & field events ranging from 100m dash to hammer throw. Most of the action is done via button mashing and timed button presses, similarly to the now classic NES Track & Field games.

The game received "mixed or average reviews" according Metacritic. In Japan, Famitsu gave the game a score of 30 out of 40.

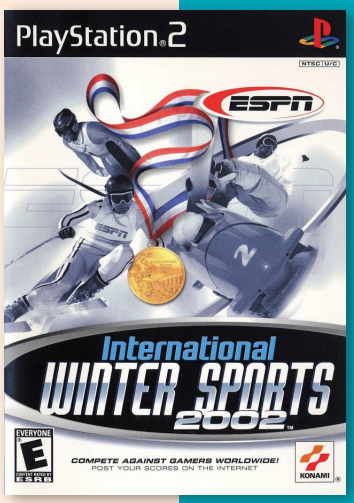
J N P

ESPN International Winter Sports 2002

6.2



Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) January 28, 2002
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players



While not officially endorsed by the Winter Olympics, the game is modeled closely to it with 10 events that include skiing, curling, bobsledding, figure skating among more. The gameplay for each event varies, but feature similar controls that require the player to tap a set of buttons when prompted for control, speed, etc.

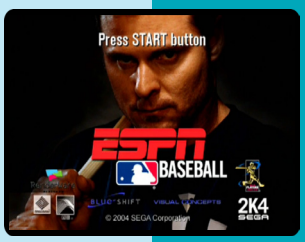
"mobygames.com"

J N P

ESPN Major League Baseball

7.9

Developer	Blue Shift
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) May 4, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players



ESPN Major League Baseball is the successor to Sega's World Series Baseball 2k3. Back are all of the game play modes from last years release: exhibition, playoffs, season, and franchise. Additionally, gamecast, duel, situation and GM career have been added to the game. All 30 MLB teams are included with their stadiums along with 16 different all-star teams.

"mobygames.com"

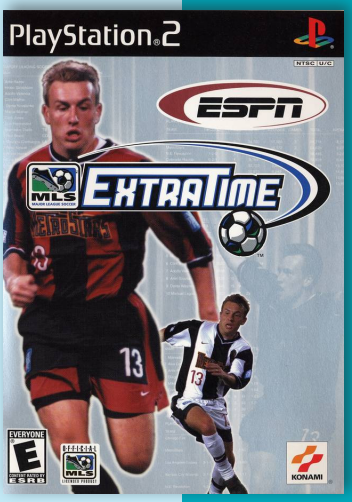
N

7.7

ESPN MLS ExtraTime

N

Developer	Konami Computer Entertainment Hawaii
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) April 16, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players



ESPN MLS Extra Time is the first soccer game created by Konami's Hawaiian Studio and borrows the game engine from the ISS series but is built from the ground up for the MLS (Major League Soccer) license.

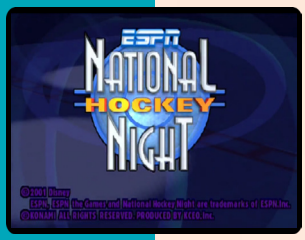
It features all 12 MLS teams of the time including 53 International soccer teams as well as 4 MLS All-Star squads to choose from along with the top players of the day with over 500 individual character animations available with authentic facial mapping. It also features authentic 3D world arenas, authentic uniforms and logos of the MLS and International squads and has five different modes to choose from including Exhibition, League and Match Play.

It features a TV-style presentation in cooperation with ESPN and has two different language options, English and Spanish, with their separate commentators: The English commentator is ESPN anchor man Bob Ley while the Spanish commentator is Louis Tapia.

"mobygames.com"

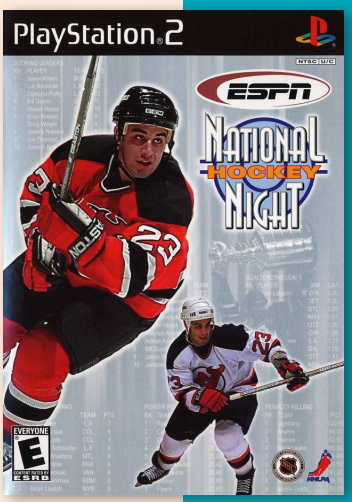
4.4

ESPN National Hockey Night



J N P

Developer	Kush Games
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 8, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

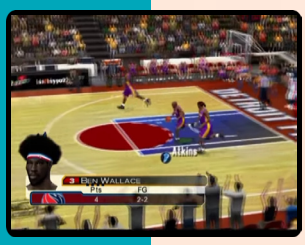


National Hockey Night includes the gameplay options that are standard for hockey games. There is exhibition mode for up to two players, season mode, create-a-player mode, and a playoffs mode. The seasons can be 29 or 82 games long. Statistics are tracked in 10 categories, and players get on hot or cold streaks as the season wears on. The create-a-player option allows players to max out a player's abilities in six different categories, choose from four different facial patterns, and adjust the player's height and weight. All 30 NHL teams are included. The graphics represent an ESPN NHL broadcast.

"mobygames.com"

ESPN NBA 2K5

8.3



Developer	Visual Concepts
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) September 30, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (10) Players

ESPN NBA 2K5 is the sixth installment in the NBA 2K series. It is the successor to ESPN NBA Basketball, and the predecessor to NBA 2K6. Ben Wallace of the Detroit Pistons is the cover athlete; this marks the first time in the series that a player other than Allen Iverson was featured as a cover athlete. It is the last NBA 2K game to be released by Sega before the company sold Visual Concepts to Take-Two Interactive, forming 2K Sports.

The game strives to emulate the National Basketball Association. Players mostly play in basketball games in several game modes, with real teams, such as the Detroit Pistons and Boston Celtics. Gameplay follows the rules and objectives of basketball and the game is presented like televised NBA games. Several game modes are available; 24/7 mode allows the player to create their own player, Association mode allows the player to play through an NBA season with a selected team, another mode lets the player compete in basketball tournaments, and a mode where the player plays street basketball is also available. The game features Stuart Scott as a presenter, Bob Fitzgerald and Bill Walton as commentators, and Michele Tafoya as a sideline reporter. The player may customize several aspects of the game, and many aesthetical details are present.

ESPN NBA 2K5 received positive reviews from critics upon release. The visuals and gameplay were widely acclaimed, while the 24/7 and Association game modes received a mixed response. The low price of the game was also well received.

Game Revolution's review praised the visuals and price, but criticized the 24/7 mode for being *"broken"*. Bob Colayco of GameSpot also praised the low price of the game, as well as the *"extremely well done"* gameplay and visuals. He found the soundtrack *"forgettable"* and thought the commentary was *"good but not great"*. Both of GameZone's two reviews were positive. They praised the online features, the 24/7 mode, the commentary and soundtrack, the visuals, and the gameplay.

ESPN NBA 2Night

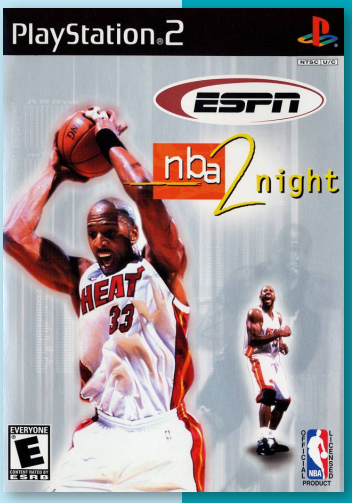
6.2

J N P

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) December 21, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

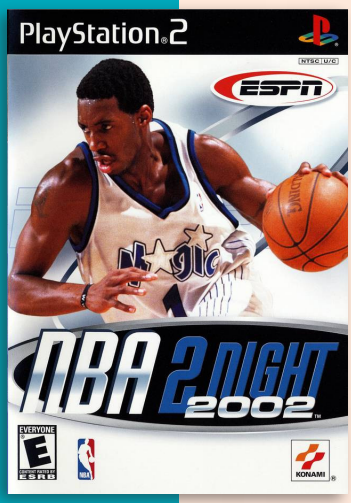
ESPN NBA 2night is a basketball game with an ESPN license. It features all the NBA teams and players and allows players to create their own player. Gameplay is a mixture between arcade and simulation style play. Game modes include: Practice, Pre-Season, NBA Season, Enhanced Season and Tournament.

In-game commentary is provided by anchormen Stuart Scott and Brent Musberger.



ESPN NBA 2Night 2002

5.9



Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) February 25, 2002
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

The game features updated rosters, new character animations and the obligatory game modes: exhibition, playoffs, season, franchise and also features a soundtrack with musicians like Pete Rock and DJ Hi-Tek. It features the voice talents of ESPN Sportscenter newscaster Stuart Scott and not only is in conjunction with ESPN but also is endorsed by Tracy McGrady.

J N P

ESPN NFL Football

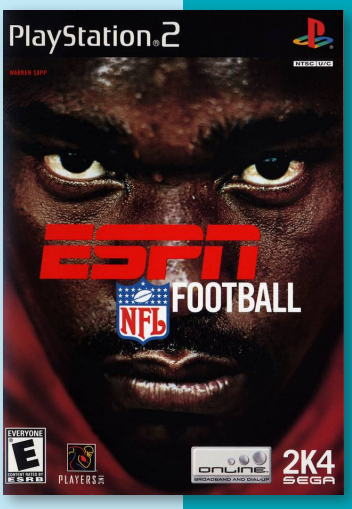
9.1

N P

Developer	Visual Concepts
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) September 3, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (16) Players

While the title of this game boasts the ESPN license, this is actually the next game in Sega's NFL 2K series.

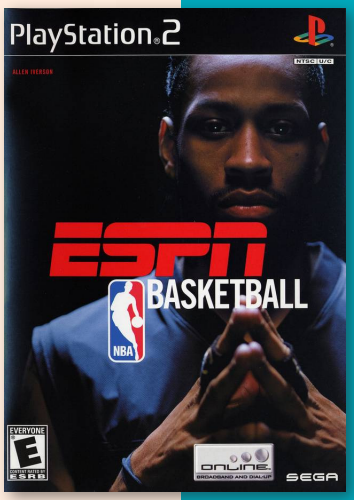
The game has many gameplay modes that include quick game, franchise, season, tournament, practice, first-person football, and online play. The most extensive mode in the game is the franchise mode. Another feature added to this game is first-person football.

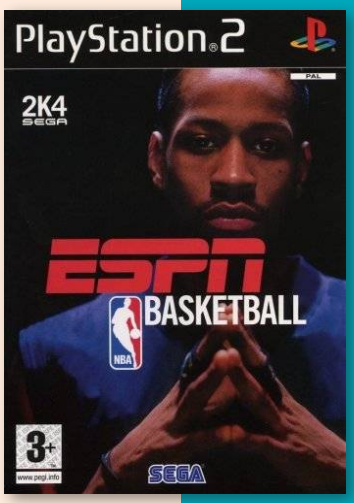


ESPN NBA Basketball

8.9

Developer	Visual Concepts
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) October 21, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (10) Players





ESPN NBA Basketball is the fifth installment in the NBA 2K franchise and the successor to NBA 2K3. Allen Iverson is the cover athlete of the game. It is the predecessor to ESPN NBA 2K5 in the NBA 2K series. It is the last NBA 2K game before sold by Sega company to forming 2k Sports.

The game simulates the experience of the National Basketball Association, as well as basketball in general, and features a mix of realistic NBA simulations, and arcade style play. The game features several game modes, such as 24/7, a mode where the player creates their own basketball player, and online multiplayer. Players play NBA games with real teams and players, as well as playing street basketball with customizable players. NBA game simulations feature commentary from Bill Fitzgerald and Tom Tolbert, and pregame shows by Kevin Frazier. The game features online multiplayer for the first time in the NBA 2K series.

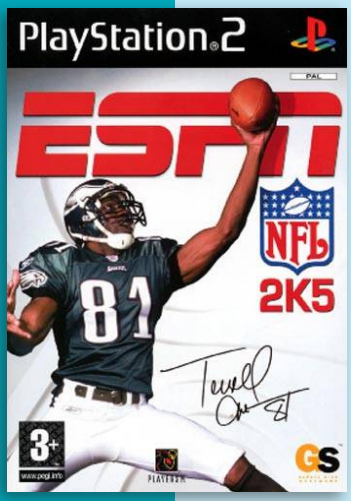
Several gameplay improvements and additions were made. The passing game for example has been rebuilt; instead of one type of basic pass, the player can freely choose from basic, behind the back, between the legs, or alley-oop passes. The previous dribbling system has been replaced by IsoMotion, a system that features many animations, allows the player to perform hesitations, in-and-outs, or ankle breakers, and emphasises quick timing and reflexes.

24/7 mode is one of the game's main features. The player creates their basketball player, customizing the physical appearance (facial features, hair, skin colour, accessories, jersey, etc.), and journeys across the United States, competing against other basketball players, including NBA stars, in tournaments or street pickup games. The player completes different challenges in different types of events against their opponent(s).

The game received a positive reception upon release, with some critics calling it the best basketball game available for the Xbox and PlayStation 2. Positive comments were mostly concerning the game's wealth of content, visuals, and overall gameplay.

ESPN NFL 2K5

9.0



Developer	Visual Concepts
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) July 20, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (16) Players

ESPN NFL 2K5 is the sixth installment of the NFL 2K series. It was the last NFL 2K game to be released before Electronic Arts signed an exclusivity deal with the NFL to make 2K's rival Madden NFL series the only officially licensed NFL game and was also the last game still being developed by Sega.

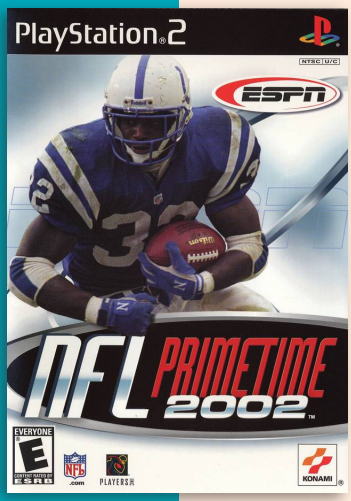
The game features a franchise mode with a SportsCenter feature hosted by Chris Berman. He outlines the games of the current week with his co-host Trey Wingo who talks about the latest injuries and free agent deals and trades during the season. Mel Kiper Jr. hosts the draft portion of the segment while Suzy Kolber reports from the sidelines. There is also weekly preparation for the coming week which allows the player to make decisions on training and preparation. Players can also create their own team deciding the team logos (over 10 are available), team name, the teams city, the teams stadium look and build, jerseys and how good the team is. It also has a feature called first-person football, which gives the player the experience on the field looking from the eyes of the players. There is also the traditional create-a-player mode.

ESPN NFL 2K5 was the first in the 2K series priced at $19.99 the day it shipped, much lower than market leader Madden NFL at $49.99. This greatly reduced Madden sales that year; one EA Sports developer recalled that *"[i]t scared the hell out of us"*. EA reduced Madden NFL 2005's price to $29.95. In December 2004 EA Sports acquired an exclusive rights agreement with the NFL and NFLPA to be the sole creator of NFL video games. The deal terminated 2K Sports production of any further NFL games. The ensuing season, Madden 2006, saw pricing returned to the $49.99 MSRP.

In December 2010, a U.S. district court judge certified a class action anti-trust lawsuit against Electronic Arts for anti-competitive practices to proceed. Electronic Arts settled the class action suit in July 2012 for $27 million, and retained its exclusive NFL license.

ESPN NFL PrimeTime 2002

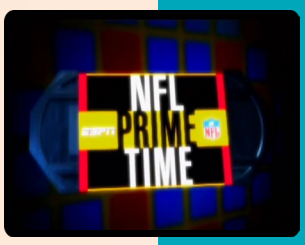
6.5



Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) December 2, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

ESPN NFL Primetime 2002 is the first football game to combine the NFL license with the ESPN license. This NFL adaptation boasts a comprehensive franchise mode that introduces some innovations in this standard mode. One of these is a draft ticker, which puts the players team on the clock each time it selects a player in the draft. With the draft ticker on, it is important to scout college players beforehand and analyze draft positions and team needs in order to preselect the team's draft candidates. In simulated games, NFL Primetime gives a variety of coach options. Here players can customize their team's aggressiveness level in offense and blitz tendencies and even set spies on more mobile quarterbacks for simulated games. Naturally, there are also obvious franchise mode options such as the ability to draft, trade, and sign/release free agents over multiple seasons.

"mobygames.com"



N

ESPN NHL 2K5

8.6

Developer	Kush Games
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(us) August 30, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (10) Players

ESPN NHL 2K5 was the last NHL Game to be published by Sega, and the last to branded by ESPN.

The game includes an extensive franchise mode where players can perform several team management functions, including hiring staff, managing player contracts, editing players, scouting new players and sending players back to minor teams for training. It also includes more traditional game modes like season, playoffs, exhibition and shootout.

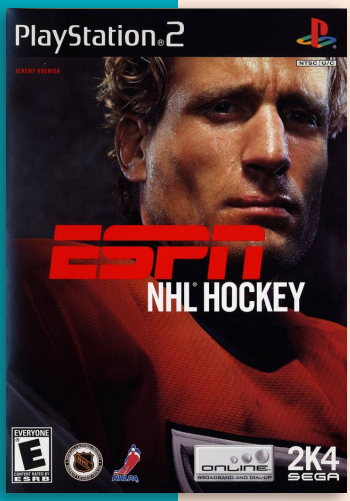
The North American release of the game features a number of specific game additions, including the ability to play the Heritage Classic, the first time an official outdoor hockey game was represented in a video game.

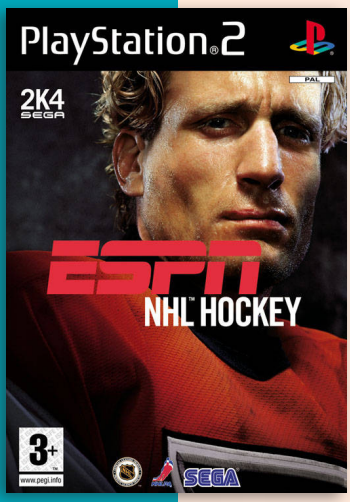
The game received "generally favorable reviews" according to Metacritic.

N P

ESPN NHL Hockey

9.0





Developer Kush Games
Publisher Sega
Release date (us) September 9, 2003
Genre Sports
Mode 1-2 (8) Players

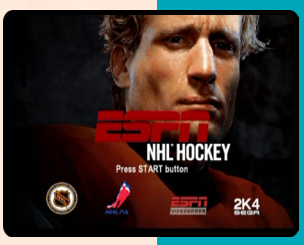
As in the previous version, NHL 2K3, players can once again perform checks into the benches, pin opponents on the boards, and design penalty killing and power-play strategies.

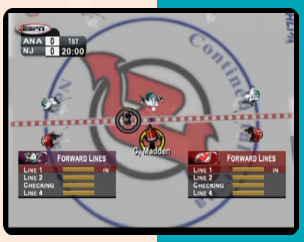
ESPN NHL Hockey adds a revamped franchise mode. This year's franchise mode includes an e-mail system that sends players notices about team injuries, current playoff statuses, and trade deadlines. Even simple words of encouragement are emailed from the team owner.

The skybox mode acts as a hub for the game's unlockables, stat tracking, and other random features. There are two new gameplay modes in this year's game: skills and mini-games. Skills mode is a re-creation of the exhibition competitions held during the NHL All-Star weekend. Players find a number of different competitions, including the hardest-shot competition, a shoot-out relay, a puck-control challenge, a fastest-skater competition, and a shooting-accuracy challenge. The roster of mini-games include pond hockey, mini-rink, shootout, and super-speed hockey.

ESPN NHL Hockey has plenty of unlockables, including classic jerseys, teams, and goalie masks. There are even a couple of unlockable mini-games.

"mobygames.com"

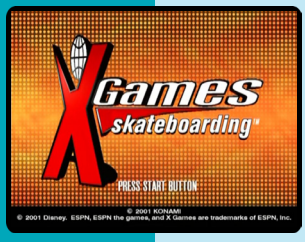




N P

ESPN X Games Skateboarding

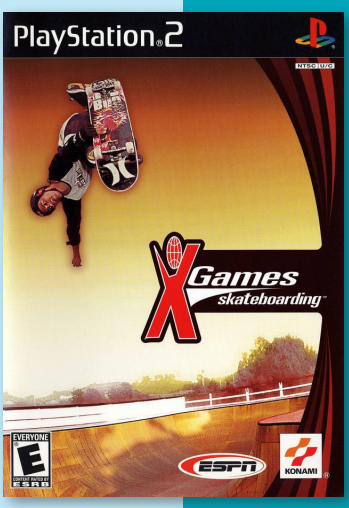
5.8



J N P

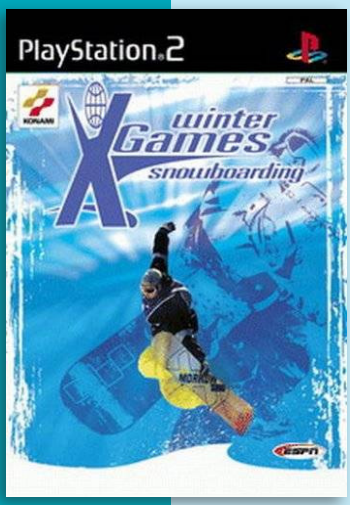
Developer KCEO
Publisher Konami
Release date (us) August 13, 2001
Genre Sports
Mode 1-2 Players

ESPN X Games Skateboarding lets players experience a simulation of actual skateboarding based on the extreme sporting event, the X Games, that are held annually. The player can choose from eight different real-life skateboarding pros such as Chad Fernandez, Lincoln Ueda, Kerry Getz, Bob Burnquist, Rick McCrank, Colin McKay, Chris Senn, and Carlos DeAndrade and may choose from 64 different authentic licensed skate board designs and equipment.



ESPN Winter X-Games Snowboarding

7.3



J N P

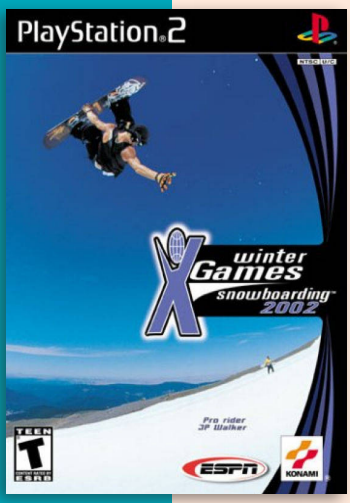
Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) October 24, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-5 Players

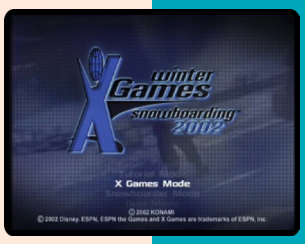
ESPN X Games Skateboarding was released as part of Konami's ESPN The Games brand. Aside from the practice, multiplayer, and free skate modes, players can participate in an X Games competition in either street or vert. In X Games, players attempt to earn the highest score within a one-minute time limit. One of the playable levels is inspired by the halfpipe used in X Games Six. The game also has an arcade mode, where players roam levels and complete various goals, and collecting spinning X Games logos, which unlocks other playable levels.

In Japan, Famitsu gave the game a score of 33 out of 40. The game received more mixed reviews in the West, however, as GameRankings and Metacritic gave it a score of 62.04% and 58 out of 100 for said version. IGN praised the ESPN integration, while criticizing the aforementioned inconsistent graphics throughout the levels in arcade mode; IGN ultimately gave it 4.9 out of 10. GameSpot gave the game 4.4, also criticizing the graphics, along with the controls.

ESPN Winter X-Games Snowboarding 2002

6.4





J N P

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) January 14, 2002
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

This is the sequel to the previous year's incarnation, ESPN Winter X-Games Snowboarding. The game features 13 professional snowboarders along with 20 authentic tracks sponsored by the Winter X Games. Players can compete in authentic events, and can also garner sponsors in order to buy better equipment and can make their own video highlights as well. Players can pull of combos with the "linking system", producing wild stunts and gaining higher scores.

"mobygames.com"

Eternal Poison

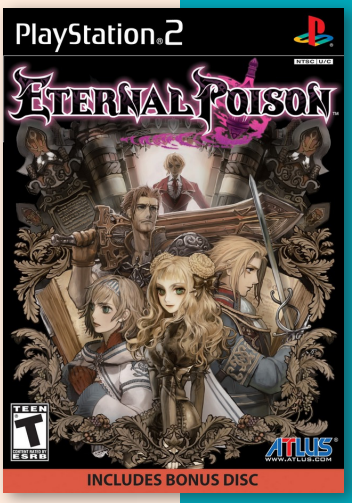
6.5

J N

Developer	Flight-Plan
Publisher	Banpresto, (us) Atlus
Release date	(jp) February 14, 2008
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Eternal Poison, released in Japan as Poison Pink, is a turn-based tactical role-playing game released for the PlayStation 2. The game is a dark fantasy RPG where the player must catch and collect demons called Majin, these monsters can then be used as fellow party members or taken back to the base for other customizations.

Eternal Poison received "mixed" reviews according to Metacritic.



Eternal Ring

6.2

J N P

Developer	From Software
Publisher	From Software, (us) Agetec, (eu) Ubisoft
Release date	(jp) March 4, 2000
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Eternal Ring is a first-person action role-playing game released as a launch title for the PS2.

The player controls Cain Morgan, a young magician who is sent to investigate the Island of No Return, where a legendary artifact called the Eternal Ring is presumed to be held. The island is home to a large number of mythical creatures, including dragons, lizard men, and gargoyles, and is the location of magical gems and rings, including the Eternal Ring.

A unique feature of the game is the use of magic rings, imbuing these magic rings with a combination of different gems creates rings that both allow the use of magic spells and also boost the player's attributes. Although the game also features knives and swords which can be acquired, the most powerful attacks come from magic rings which are the game's focus. A gauge indicates charge time for magic spells.

Found on the island are strangely powered gems each having one of six elements. Elements include Fire, Water, Earth, Wind, Light, and Darkness. When creating rings, the powers instilled in the rings will differ according to the gem's element, among other factors. Each gem has a level from 1 to 5. Gems are found at increasing levels as the game progresses.

Eureka Seven Vol. 1: The New Wave

5.4

Developer	Bandai
Publisher	Bandai, (us) Namco Bandai Games
Release date	(jp) October 27, 2005
Genre	Action, Shooter
Mode	1 Player

J N

The two Eureka Seven games are based on an anime. The game features a different cast of characters and takes place two years before the anime.

The game feature a variety of gameplay variations including vehicular, melee, and weapon-based combat, skateboard-style hoverboard racing called “lifting”, and commanding large LFO robots.

Eureka Seven Vol. 2: The New Vision

4.0

J N

Developer	Bandai
Publisher	Bandai, (us) Namco Bandai Games
Release date	(jp) May 11, 2006
Genre	Action, Shooter
Mode	1 Player

The second Eureka Seven game, New Vision, takes place two years after the events of New Wave. The game, once again puts its focus on Sumner Sturgeon, who left the military at the end of New Wave, was marked as killed in action by the military. Many characters from the first game make returns in New Vision.

Euro Rally Champion

6.6

Developer	Brain in a Jar
Publisher	Oxygen Interactive
Release date	(eu) September 5, 2005
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

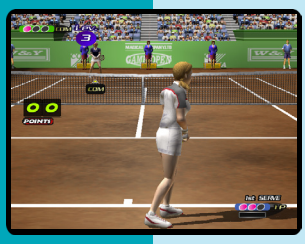
P

Euro Rally Champion is a simple rally simulation. The game feature two game modes (championship, timed race), two skill levels (easy, normal), two game options (automatic or manual transmission, autosave or not).

Players drive in various countrysides, mountains, but also in Africa and a closed circuit. Players will have first to choose the driver, and car, then fine tune it before the race.

European Tennis Pro

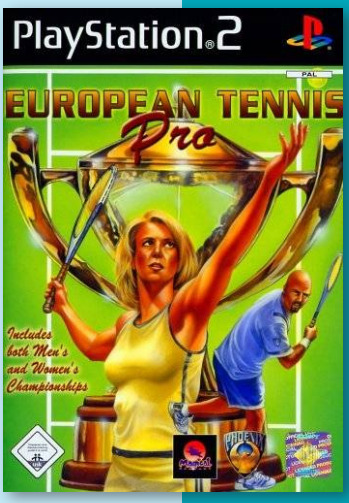
7.0



Developer	Magical Company (Mahou)
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

European Tennis Pro is a tennis game. In addition to the training mode players can either compete in an exhibition match or a world tour. Exhibition matches can have either a tie break, a three game set or a six game set format and can last for one, three or five sets. The world tour consists of twenty-four different venues and the player can select from a choice of sixteen different players, each with differing strengths.

"mobygames.com"



Evangelion: Jo

7.2

Developer	Bec
Publisher	Namco Bandai Games
Release date	(jp) June 4, 2009
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

The game is based on the first two Neon Genesis Evangelion Rebuild movies but it also incorporates elements of the original series. The player must buy skills and weapons to fight the Angels. All scenes of the fight are performed in 3D. Players also has the opportunity to choose their interactions with other characters. The unfolding of the battles and the dialogues make it possible to unlock different ends.

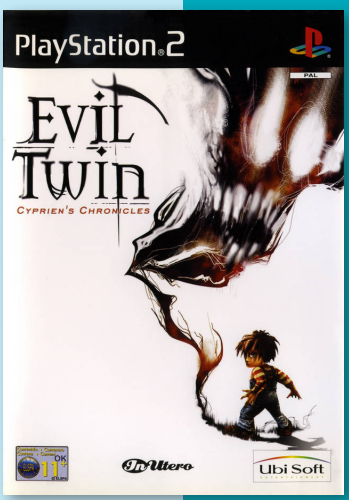
Evil Twin: Cyprien's Chronicles

6.0

Developer	In Utero
Publisher	Ubisoft
Release date	(eu) December 7, 2001
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

Players takes control over a young orphan called Cyprien, who is taken to a nightmarish world and possesses the ability to transform into a Super version of himself. His alter-ego, Supercyp aids him in his journey to Loren Darith to free his teddy bear, Lenny.

The game was praised for its level design, art direction and music but the game has also been criticized for the poor controls.

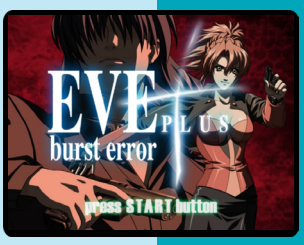


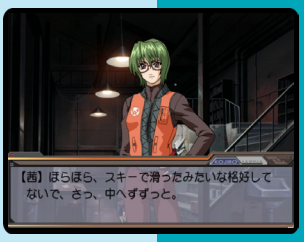
EVE Burst Error Plus

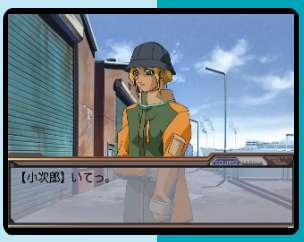
Developer	C's Ware
Publisher	GameVillage
Release date	(jp) July 24, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Eve Burst Error Plus is a remake of Eve Burst Error. The main story and most of the gameplay remain the same as in the original version. The remake has updated graphics (especially noticeable is the more realistic style of character graphics, as opposed to the "super-deformed" style of the original), better event management, alternate scenarios, and more animations.

The game is set in modern-day Japan. The player controls two characters: a young, seemingly careless private investigator Kojiroh, and the special agent Marina. Kojiroh have to find the director of the Eldian International School, Mr. Ko's find a missing painting. Marina is hired by the ambassador of a Middle East republic to protect his daughter Mayako from terrorists. Switching between Kojiroh and Marina, the player gradually finds out the connection between the two cases.







J

EVE: New Generation

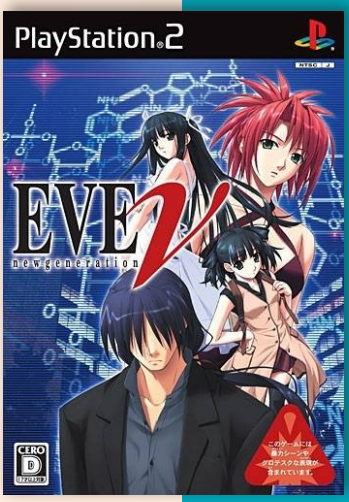
8.0

J

Developer	Kadokawa
Publisher	Kadokawa
Release date	(jp) August 31, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

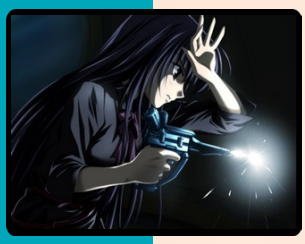
In this installment of the EVE series, the two protagonists are once again the young careless private detective Kojiroh Amagi, and the government agent Marina Houjou. Five years have passed since the events described in EVE: The Fatal Attraction. One day, Kojiroh bumps into a young girl on the street. Immediately afterwards he receives a call from his ex-girlfriend, who tells him a girl has been kidnapped, and sends him a picture of that girl. He realizes this is the very same girl he just saw on the street.

Meanwhile, Marina encounters a young man who jumps from the roof of a high building in front of her eyes. Examining the body, Marina notices a strange tattoo on the young man's hand. Once again, the player gradually finds out the connection between the two cases.



Ever17: The Out of Infinity

7.6



J

Developer	Kid
Publisher	Kid, Success, CyberFront
Release date	(jp) August 29, 2002
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Ever17 is the second game in KID's Infinity series. The game is not connected to Never7: The End of Infinity either by storyline or protagonists, but both games share the same "dreamy", semi-futuristic setting, and their stories have a similar style. The gameplay of Ever17 is that of a visual novel: the player reads dialogues and watches scenes, viewing them as one of the two protagonists, occasionally having to make decision as to what to do next and how to answer in a conversation. Those decisions influence the course of the story and lead to different endings.

The game is set in a huge futuristic water amusement park. Built on the ocean, this park is technology's latest word, and is at the first sight the most fascinating and secure construction of all. However, something goes wrong, and seven people - two boys and five girls - become trapped in the park. The danger increases as they face a mysterious virus that brings them on the verge of death.

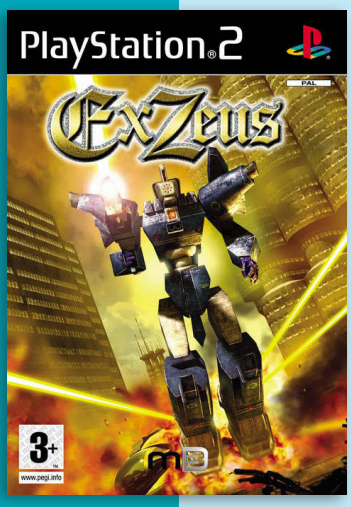
The player controls two different characters: Takeshi Kuranari, a simple, normal Japanese teenager, and a mysterious boy with amnesia, who cannot even remember his name. The relationship between the characters becomes more and more tense as the story develops.

"mobygames.com"

Premium Edition

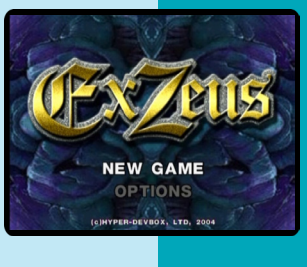
Ex Zeus

6.7



Developer	Hyper-Devbox
Publisher	Metro3D
Release date	(eu) July 30, 2004
Genre	Action, Shooter
Mode	1 Player

ExZeus is an on-rails arcade shooter in a third-person perspective. The player can move in all directions while progressing forward, shooting enemies and collecting power-ups and gold. The player has the ability to lock onto enemies and fire missiles at them, and also has a laser they can launch. The player can also send out nuclear bombs that destroy all of the enemies on screen. At the end of every level, the player faces a boss.



P

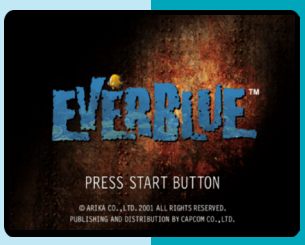
Everblue

7.1

Developer	Arika
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	(jp) August 9, 2001
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Everblue is an adventure game based on scuba diving and the first in the Everblue series. The player plays as Leo, a novice scuba diver, searching for treasure and learning about marine animal life.

It is a first person game set underwater. The player takes the role of a scuba diver salvaging items from sunken ships and photographing underwater wildlife while either avoiding or confronting predators like sharks. The game also features an inventory system for collected objects, healing items, weapons, and tools, as well as an above water town with shops and NPCs.



J P

Everblue 2

5.9

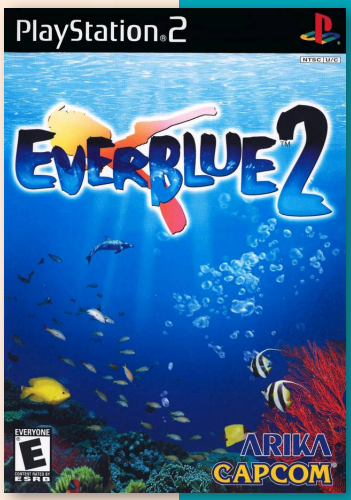
J N P

Developer	Arika
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	(jp) August 8, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Everblue 2 is is the sequel to Everblue. Arika, the developers of both games, followed it with the spiritual sequel Endless Ocean, for the Wii.

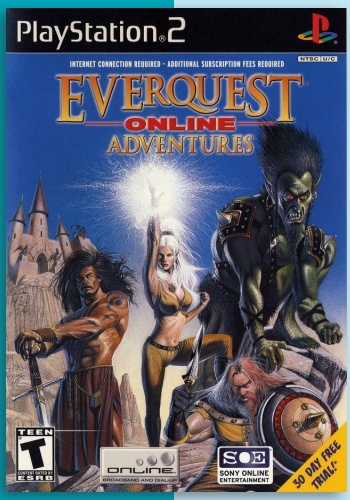
Player Leo is a diver who sails through a treacherous Caribbean sea with his friends. Their ship sinks in a huge storm and they swim to a nearby island. There, they meet a group of scuba divers called The Amigos. While on the island, Leo and the Amigos discover that a nefarious aquatic salvaging company named SeaDross is searching for an ancient pirate treasure called Erebos. Leo and his friends race against time to locate the Erebos, diving to several underwater locations including.

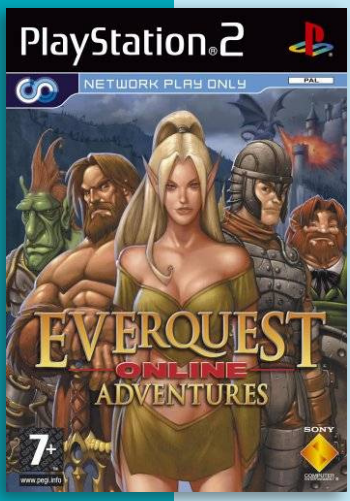
The player earns money by finding precious materials with their metal, glass, wood, clay, and stone sonars, and looting artifacts from shipwrecks. This money can be used to buy equipment allowing a player access to deeper and more challenging dives. Over time the player unlocks dive sites such as a sunken freighter, a downed airplane, a pirate ship, a sunken luxury liner, a submarine and an undersea temple.



7.4

EverQuest Online Adventures





N P

Developer	Sony Online Entertainment
Publisher	Sony Online Entertainment
Release date	(us) February 9, 2003
Genre	MMORPG
Mode	1 - (3000) Players

EverQuest Online Adventures was a fantasy MMORPG for the PlayStation 2. The game is part of the EverQuest franchise. The game was shut down on March 29, 2012 after nine years of operation.

The game was set in the fictional world of Norrath 500 years prior to the original EverQuest, in the "Age of Adventure". The world featured many places familiar to fans of the original and most of the differences were explained in the lore of EverQuest. Players create their own story and history through battles, exploration and cave hunting.

Five continents, Odus, Tunaria (the past before Antonica, as the Elves are just beginning to leave the world), Faydwer, Kunark, and Velious, the moon Luclin, and alternate planes of existence are available to explore, although some can only be reached after a character achieves a certain level of experience.

The gameplay focused on character advancement, environment combat, quests, exploration, grouping, and socializing. It also contained a simple dueling system for 1 v. 1 player action (not counting player pets), which suffered much criticism and was involved in many item duping glitches.

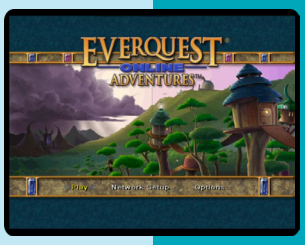
There were fifteen playable classes, and ten races.

Classes included Cleric, Druid, Shaman, Enchanter, Wizard, Alchemist, Necromancer, Magician, Bard, Ranger, Rogue, Monk, Paladin, Shadowknight, and Warrior.

Races consisted of Dwarves, Elves, Dark Elves, Human (Eastern and Western), Gnome, Troll, Ogre, Barbarian, Erudite, and Halfling.

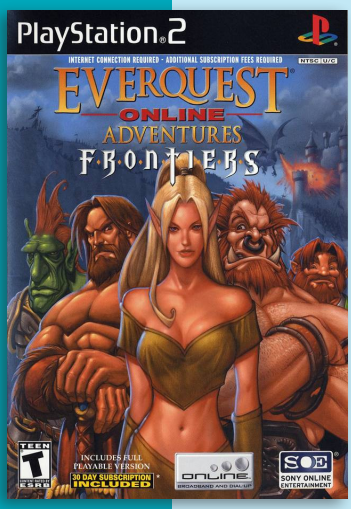
EverQuest Online Adventures was developed so that it did not require a hard disk drive like Final Fantasy XI did. Since no HDD for the system was ever released in PAL-territories EQOA remained the only MMORPG there.

The end of EverQuest Online Adventures was announced on the game's site on February 29, 2012. The shut down date was Thursday, March 29, 2012.



EverQuest Online Adventures: Frontiers

7.7



Developer	Sony Online Entertainment
Publisher	Sony Online Entertainment
Release date	(us) November 17, 2003
Genre	MMORPG
Mode	1 - (3000) Players

EverQuest Online Adventures: Frontiers was launched on November 17, 2003. Much of the game was improved upon the original design. Included was a new playable race, a new character class, thousands of new items, hundreds of new quests, new musical scores, level advancement to 60, a class mastery system to further customize characters, and 2 additional areas to explore.

Evergrace

5.9

J N P

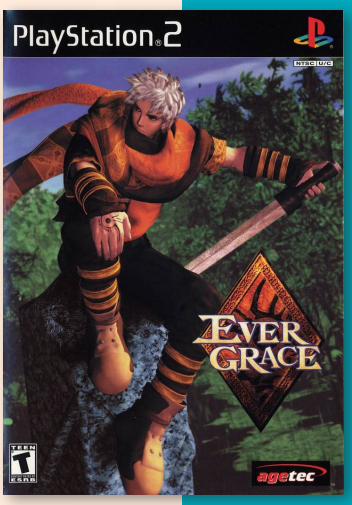
Developer	From Software
Publisher	From Software, (us) Agetec, (eu) Ubisoft
Release date	Action role-playing
Genre	(jp) April 27, 2000
Mode	1 Player

Evergrace is a action role-playing game released as a launch title for the system in North America and Europe.

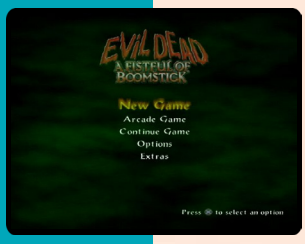
The game features two main characters, Darius the swordsman and Sharline the homemaker, with two distinctly different storylines and different battle techniques. The game allows players to switch between characters at any save point, and uses an experience system dependent on items and equipment rather than statistical upgrades. Another feature is the Palmira Action System which allows players to improve the physical abilities of their characters by combining specialized crystals with their armaments.

Evergrace also features a bonus dungeon that is named after Shadow Tower, another game by FromSoftware, a company often known for including past game references in their games. The Moonlight Sword, for example, a weapon that originated in their flagship series, King's Field, also appears in Evergrace as well as its follow-up, Forever Kingdom.

According to Famitsu, Evergrace debuted on Japanese sales charts at fifth place, selling 75,083 copies. Evergrace sold 134,865 copies in the region by the end of 2000.



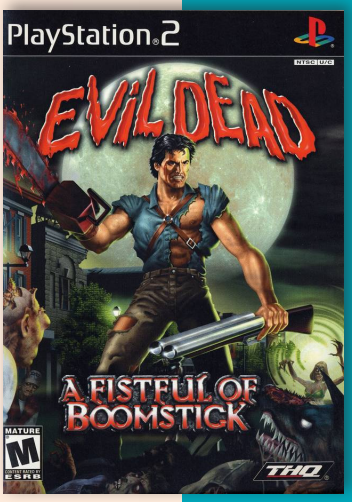
5.5



N P

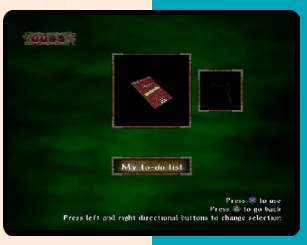
Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick

Developer	VIS Entertainment
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) May 20, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

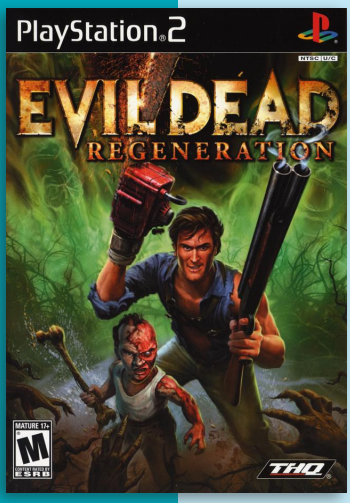


Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick is an action hack and slash game. It is based on the movie trilogy The Evil Dead. It is set eleven years after the events of Army of Darkness, and three years after Jenny (Ash's girlfriend from Evil Dead: Hail to the King), was killed in a bus crash. Bruce Campbell returns to voice Ash, and the voices for supporting characters are provided by several notable voice actors, including Debi Mae West, Wendee Lee, Rob Paulsen and Tom Kenny.

The game received "mixed" reviews according to the Metacritic. Chris Carle of IGN gave the game a mixed review, calling its gameplay *"fun, if a little repetitive"*, and noting that its twenty-dollar retail value is a suitable maximum price.



Evil Dead: Regeneration



Developer	Cranky Pants Games
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) September 13, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

6.8

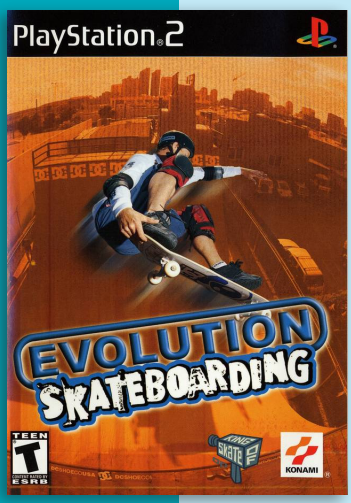
N P

Evil Dead: Regeneration is an action hack and slash game based on The Evil Dead series. It is unconnected to the previous video game Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick. The game takes place in an alternate reality from the original trilogy, depicting what would have happened if Ash did not get sent back in time at the end of the film Evil Dead II.

The gameplay mostly consists of hack and slash with small conveniently placed puzzles. The player takes the role of Ash Williams as he fights off hordes of Deadites. The player can find different kinds of weapons in levels which find use in different situations. Early on in the game Ash receives his sidekick Sam who fights along with him in battle. Unlike other games where killing a friend ingame is taboo at best, Sam actually comically dies many times in the game.

Evolution Skateboarding

4.4



Developer Konami
Publisher Konami
Release date (us) October 9, 2002
Genre Sports
Mode 1-2 Players

Evolution Skateboarding is a sports game released for the GameCube and PlayStation 2. It includes several popular skateboarders such as Rick McCrank, Arto Saari, Kerry Getz, and Danny Way. There is also a create-a-skater feature and an unlockable character for every skater the player completes the game as. There are also sets of level specific songs such as a metal-remix of the Metal Gear Solid theme and a Castlevania theme after unlocking the Vampire Hunter. Levels are unlocked by beating a certain amount of objectives in a current level, such as collecting items like boots and other objects, performing tricks in certain areas of a level, and grinding a certain amount of meters. The Evolution Skateboarding engine was used in the bonus skateboarding mode included in the PlayStation 2 version of Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance in 2003.

J N P

Evolution Snowboarding

3.8

J N P

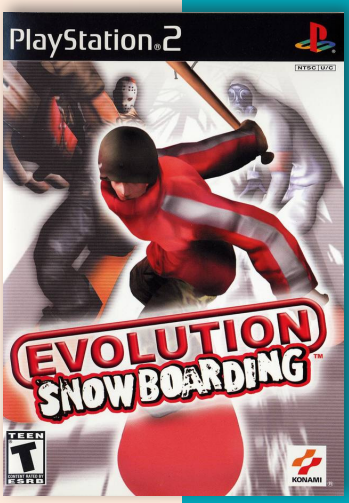
Developer Konami
Publisher Konami
Release date (us) November 26, 2002
Genre Sports
Mode 1-2 Players

Evolution Snowboarding takes a new perspective on the snowboarding genre. It is the sequel to Evolution Skateboarding.

The game uses a combination of Snowboarding and Combat skills to complete certain tasks and defeat enemies. Players can use punches, kicks, weapons, grabs, and board tricks to battle the Big Core's minions.

Weapons can be found throughout the levels of the game. Weapons include spiked bats, chains, and others. The player may also use the board itself to directly or indirectly attack foes.

Music from the game includes artists such as: Slipknot, Stone Sour, Murderdolls, Goneblind, Killswitch Engage, Chimaira, 36 Crazyfists, and Five Pointe O. This music was put in the game to match up with the plot's dark and violent tone.



EX Jinsei Game

J

Developer	CAPS Inc.
Publisher	Takara
Release date	(jp) March 7, 2002
Genre	Board
Mode	1-4 Players

Ex Jinsei Game is the first game based on the Game of Life for the Playstation 2 console. This new version features a 3D board, over 40 different jobs, and more than 10000 different events. Players as usual can customize their character. The game also feature a map editing function.

The game was also released in a deluxe pack with a roulette controller (EX Jinsei Game Roulette Controller (TAKC-00001)).

"psxdatacenter.com"

EX Jinsei Game II

6.0

Developer	CAPS Inc.
Publisher	Takara, Atlus, Takara Tomy
Release date	(jp) November 6, 2003
Genre	Board
Mode	1-4 Players

Ex Jinsei Game II is the second game based on the Game of Life for the Playstation 2 console. The game lets up to four players compete in a virtual version of the The Game of Life board game. New features include a couples mode and versus battle mini-games played out on the board itself.

This was also released in a deluxe pack with a roulette controller.

"psxdatacenter.com"

J

EX Okuman Chouja Game

J

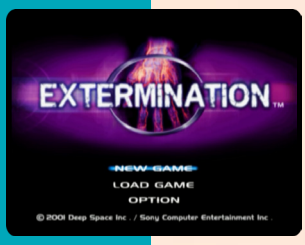
Developer	Takara
Publisher	Takara, Atlus
Release date	(jp) December 27, 2001
Genre	Board
Mode	1-4 Players

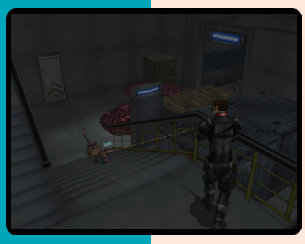
EX Okuman Chouja Game - The Money Battle is the third game in the series (after the first 2 games that were released on the Playstation) The game features the same cartoon characters and the same isometric view but this time with 3d polygon characters.

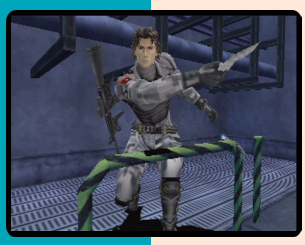
As usual in the series there are board squares in which there are mini games, a bank for loans, a card slot to get cards, etc.

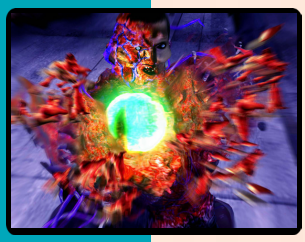
Extermination

6.7









Developer	Deep Space
Publisher	SCEI, (eu) SCEE, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) March 8, 2001
Genre	Survival horror
Mode	1 Player

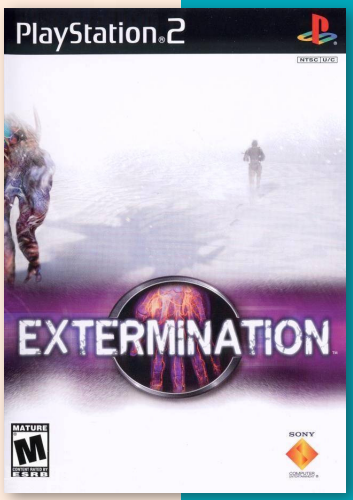
The game start on December 24, 2005. Sergeant Dennis Riley, member of the special U.S. Marine Team Red Light receives a distress call from Fort Stewart, a top secret research facility in Antarctica. The signal requests an immediate air strike on the base. The team is sent to investigate the matter, but their plane crashes in the tundra. When Dennis arrives at the facility he finds out that something horrible has occurred, and must fight for his life as he encounters mutated creatures and is in danger of getting infected himself.

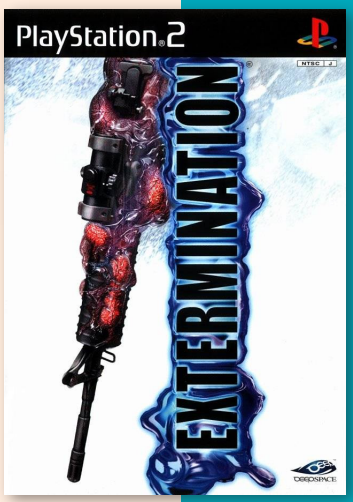
Extermination is a survival horror game. The player character has limited ammunition for his firearms and in many cases it is advisable to run away from monsters. Besides the traditional health bar Dennis also has an Infection Rate, which may gradually grow when attacked by monsters. Once his Infection Rate reaches 100% he becomes very weak and would eventually mutate into a monster. Infection can be countered by applying MTS vaccines.

The player character's default weapon, a special purpose rifle, can be customized with enhancements such as zoom scope, flashlight grip, radar, and parts which convert it to other weapon types such as flame thrower, shotgun, or rocket launcher. Dennis can also fight with a knife. Throughout the game batteries must be collected and used for activating various machines and saving the game.

Since the title was a first-party game and came out very early in the system's life cycle, it was used as a showcase for the system at trade shows before its release. The game was considered the first survival horror release on the PlayStation 2 and generated some hype amongst critics, but Extermination only received mostly average reviews. Former members of the development team joined Access Games. There are significant differences between the European and North American versions of the game including a redesign of the main protagonist, and entirely rerecorded dialogue using different voice actors.

The game received a generally average to positive reception from critics.





J N P

RON FESTEJO

EYETOY DEVELOPER

by: PSW (US) 2003 #13

What role can we expect the EyeToy to play within Sony's online pans?
I think that it will initially start off small. Like being able to see who it is that you're playing against in any of the online games. But in the future, it might be possible to use your PlayStation2 to have a conversation with someone across town or across the world.

The *EyeToy: Play* package is very accessible, but do you see potential for the peripheral to function within more serious, personal gameplay experiences?
Of course *EyeToy: Play* is simply introducing the technology to both the consumers and the developers. Once it's out I'm sure that developers will begin to come up with new and innovative ways of utilizing the EyeToy. I personally cannot wait! We're also working on some interesting technologies ourselves.

While the *EyeToy: Play* software is itself extremely entertaining, what incentives are there for developers to integrate EyeToy functionality into their titles?
Developers have the opportunity of adding a little something extra to their title. You could take a photo of your face and use it in a game, like *This Is Soccer* or just add a kind of extra mini-game that uses the camera. The incentive will be there if enough people buy the first game.

Do you see the EyeToy as a short-term one-off release, a niche peripheral that will continue to be supported in the medium-term, or the beginning of a new product family for the PlayStation brand?
It's definitely the beginning of new product family for the PlayStation brand. Peripherals generally get a bad name, as they get released for double (sometimes triple) the price of a normal game and then it's not supported, so you're stuck with something very expensive that you can only use with one game. The beauty of EyeToy is that it's very flexible. We will be supporting it and other developers have already expressed interest in developing for it. The price is also appealing, as it's the same price you'd pay for a normal PlayStation2 game. For that you get the EyeToy and *EyeToy: Play*. That's a bargain!

How would you like to improve the EyeToy?
My team and I have spent a long time working on the EyeToy and making sure that consumers are getting quality hardware for the price. The picture you get is very good, I think, and you've also got a microphone in there. It's a future proof as we could make it. We continue to improve the software-side side so that we can evolve the types of gaming experiences that we give the players.

Can you reveal any details about the planned software release, due later this year?
The next EyeToy game will involved more active, energetic and engaging gameplay. Unfortunately, I cannot say anything more than that for a little while yet.

Finally, why should *PSW* readers get excited about EyeToy?
It's a great piece of hardware that will compliment your PlayStation2. The game that you get with it are all fun to play and will be a great laugh when you get friends and family together. You will also, eventually, be able to use it to contact friends when playing games together online or just chatting. Plus, it's finally the game to bring all those non-gamers into our world, a game your girlfriend is going to love - the only problem will be getting her off the EyeToy so that you can play!

A new way of gaming has begun. EyeToy™:Play is a collection of twelve mini games that puts you in the thick of the action. Simply plug in the small motion-sensitive camera and watch as you're transformed from your lounge room onto your screen; where your head, shoulders, arms and legs control every action. Become a kung fu master, soccer pro, DJ, boxing champ, even a juggling expert. And the best part is, the whole family can play. **EyeToy™. Twelve games, one camera.**

EYETOY™

www.eyetoy.com

PlayStation 2

EyeToy Play: Astro Zoo

3.0

Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE, (au) SCE Australia
Release date	(eu) November 2, 2007
Genre	Party
Mode	1-2 Players

Astro Zoo is an EyeToy title released only in Europe and Australia. Developed for younger players, the game is set in a space zoo which has spun into disarray from a speeding comet. Players must put the zoo back in order by catching escaped animals, distracting them while faults are repaired, keeping beasts away from each other and doing all sorts of other jobs that'll test a zookeeper's speed and skill.

EyeToy Play: Hero

4.5

Developer	SCEE
Publisher	SCEE, (au) SCE Australia
Release date	(au) November 13, 2008
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

EyeToy Play: Hero comes complete with a real toy sword for players to wield on their quest. The EyeToy USB Camera will track the sword's movements. Players can watch their swordplay unfold live on-screen as they dodge bandits, hack their way through dense undergrowth, take on the enormous black knight, and more. Players need to make it through a wide range of challenges, and become the hero of the land.

EyeToy Play: PomPom Party

6.0

Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE, (au) SCE Australia
Release date	(eu) November 12, 2008
Genre	Party
Mode	1-4 Players

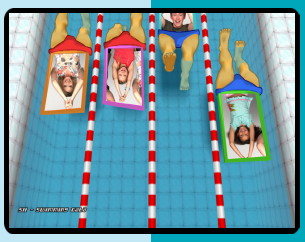
EyeToy: Play -- Pom Pom Party is designed for mostly young girls. The game comes complete with a real set of pompoms, and as players follow the directions on-screen and wave them to the groove of the music, the EyeToy USB Camera will detect the players movements and score their dancing.

EyeToy Play: Sports

5.8

Developer	SCEE
Publisher	SCEE, (au) SCE Australia
Release date	(eu) November 3, 2006
Genre	Party
Mode	1-8 Players

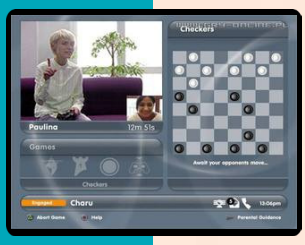
Play Sports is broken into several main sections, depending on how many players are taking part. Each one provides a scenario where players ability at any of the 101 given mini-games determines how successful they are. The games are varied and designed to give players a flash of quick addictive gameplay. For example, in Par for the Course, they're placed in a golf setting where their character has to putt the ball under par.



P

EyeToy: Chat

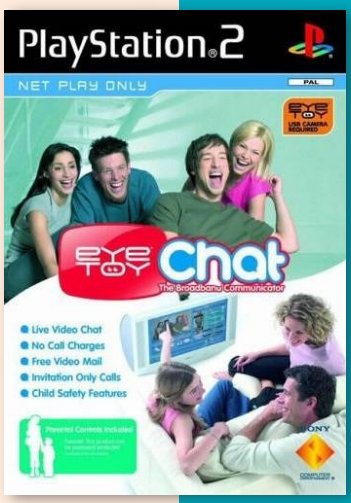
3.5



P

Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE
Release date	(eu) February 11, 2005
Genre	Miscellaneous
Mode	2-256 Players

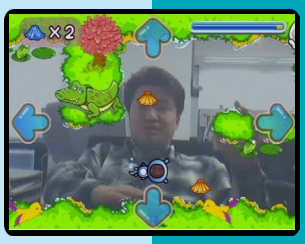
Primarily EyeToy Chat is a video phone application for PlayStation 2s equipped with an EyeToy and a network adapter. In addition to chatting and other video communication features, EyeToy Chat includes three simple games that can be played while connected. Naval War, where players try to bomb each others squares in turns. Chess and Checkers. The games do not have any computer AI or local play option.



EyeToy: EduKids

Developer	SCEK, Arisu Media
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(ko) January 20, 2005
Genre	Party
Mode	1 Player

EyeToy: EduKids was the first game developed and released by Sony Computer Entertainment Korea. The game takes an edutainment approach to gaming and features full EyeToy support. Developed in cooperation with education company Arisu Media, EyeToy: EduKids targets pre-school children and children in low levels of elementary school.



ALEX RIGOPULOS
HARMONIX'S COFUNDER SPEAKS

by: GMR 2005 Jan

Sony has released its most fully fleshed-out EyeToy game yet; *AntiGrav*, a hoverboard racer you control with your body.

What's up with AntiGrav?
Sony essentially offered us a blank slate and challenged us to come up with an entirely new game concept.
Eventually we were struck by a concept that we all quickly recognized as really quite compelling: letting the player use his body to control a 3D game character.

Where do you think the EyeToy can go from here?
I hope we'll start to see people experiment with totally different ideas for the camera as well... There are a lot of really far-out game ideas lurking here, and i'm hopeful the game-development community will take advantage of a great opportunity to try something different for a change.

What do you think is right about games these days? What's wrong?
Every year I go to E3, and almost all of the games on the show floor are, at their core, the same game that were there the year before and the year before that. There are always a few exceptions, thank God, but very few. This bores me to death. I love games, I have money to spend on games, i'm *dying* to spend money on games... I'm lucky to find one or two games that really excite me. This is a travesty, considering the incredible creative horsepower of the game-development community.

Where do you think games should be headed as a medium?
Currently, I think we're trapped in a rut of creative stagnation, and if we don't find a way out of it, it's eventually going to hurt our industry, because a lot of gamers are, I believe, slowly growing fatigued by the repetition. If we don't invent new ways to entertain our audience, then eventually they'll grow bored and start finding more interesting places to spend their time.

What other creators inspire you?
Masaya Matsuura's game [PaRappa the Rapper] have been an inspiration to Harmonix for many years, and in fact, we've talked with him off and on about a collaboration of some kind. More recently, when I played *Katamari Damacy* earlier this year, it absolutely BLEW MY MIND. I'm dying to track down Keita Takahashi and thank him.

What about the next generation?
I expect that the transformation from the PS2 to the next generation has much bigger implication for gamers than the transition from the PS1 to the PS2 did. Next generation systems [are] going to provide such a quantum leap... Of course, the graphics will be gorgeous, but more importantly, big advances in things like physics systems and A.I. depth will make the game worlds a heck of a lot more "real". I'm really looking forward to it.

EyeToy: AntiGrav

7.1

Developer	Harmonix Music Systems
Publisher	SCEA, (eu) SCEE, (au) SCE Australia
Release date	(us) November 9, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-4 Players

EyeToy: AntiGrav is a hoverboard game by Harmonix. It was touted as the first "real" game for EyeToy targeted to more seasoned gamers. The earlier games such as Play and Groove were geared towards younger kids for family or party fun. Unlike the earlier EyeToy games, the player's image is not shown inside the Antigrav game. Instead, the player's movement is reflected in the animated character in the game. Players moves their body to control the on-screen hoverboard rider to go through an obstacle course. Players needs to make turns and jump over or duck under obstacles by moving his body in front of the EyeToy. The game allows one player at a time, but supports up to four players taking turns.

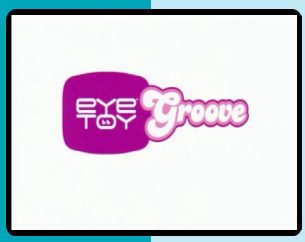
As a game developed by Harmonix, much effort was put into the music and sound effects for the game. The tracks are performed by Apollo 440, and the soundtrack changes according to what the player is doing in the game.

When the game was first released in the USA in November 2004, it was bundled with the EyeToy hardware. The PAL release in March 2005 was available as a standalone game and an Eyetoy Bundle.

N P

EyeToy: Groove

7.3



J N P

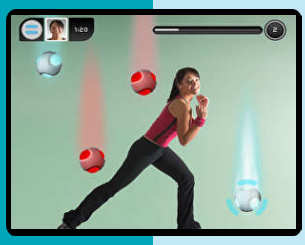
Developer	SCEE
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(us) April 20, 2004
Genre	Music
Mode	1-4 Players

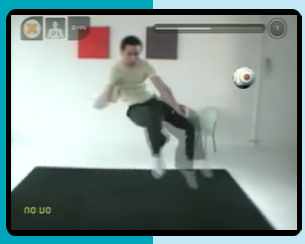
Building on from the 'Beat Freak' mode from EyeToy: Play, players must hit targets on the edges of the screen with their arms in time to the music. There will sometimes be stars that require players to follow it from one position to the other. There are also freestyle segments in which players earn points by freely moving about on screen.

The game received "average" reviews according Metacritic.

EyeToy: Kinetic

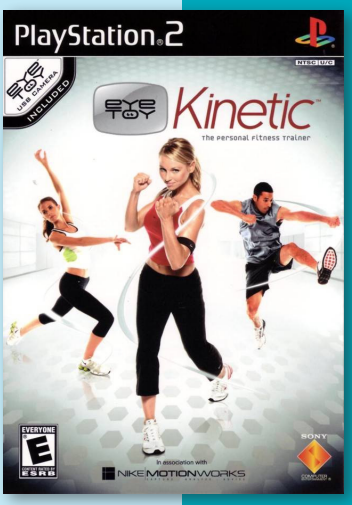
7.8

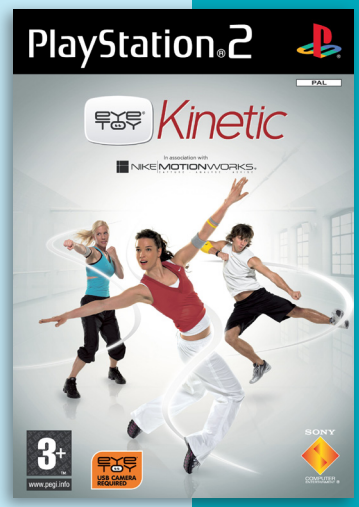




N P

Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA
Release date	(eu) September 23, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-4 Players





EyeToy: Kinetic is an exercise program, or exergaming title developed in collaboration with Nike Motionworks. It has been designed to help the player improve their fitness and health using a variety of exercise games.

The game includes a wide angle "Full Vision Lens" attachment that fits over the Eye Toy lens. Without it, the player's image on the screen is too large to play this game properly. It is held in a foam insert in the standard memory card holder in the disc case. The lens attachment is not sold separately, so if it is broken or lost then the only recourse is to repurchase the entire game.

EyeToy: Kinetic is separated into four different sections, containing exercise games under the certain groups:

The 'Cardio Zone' contains games designed to improve your cardiovascular fitness.

The 'Combat Zone' is designed to improve speed, physical strength and flexibility.

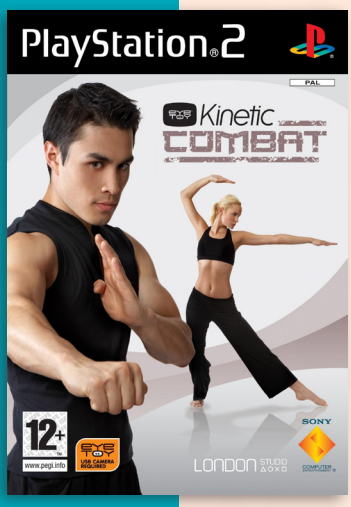
The 'Toning Zone' contains games designed for body conditioning and exercise.

The 'Mind and Body Zone' is designed to improve breathing, posture and relaxation.

The game also offers a personal trainer mode: a 12-week programme of various games from the four zones.

EyeToy: Kinetic Combat

6.4



Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE, (au) SCE Australia
Release date	(eu) November 17, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-4 Players

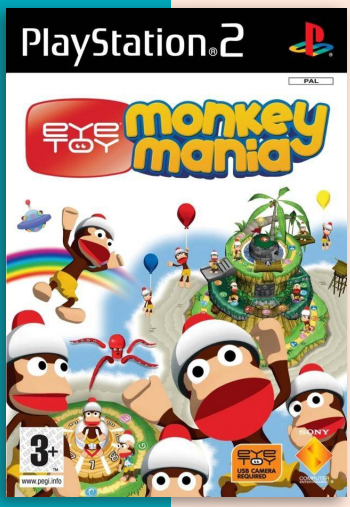
P

EyeToy: Kinetic Combat is the sequel to EyeToy: Kinetic. Kinetic Combat mixes the martial art Hung Gar Kung Fu with holistic fitness.

Players journey through four themed martial arts zones: Dragon, a gentle introduction to Kung Fu. Tiger, building strength through cardiovascular fitness. Mantis, focusing on agility and balance. And Phoenix, bringing all techniques together in fluid movements.

EyeToy: Monkey Mania

6.1



Developer	SCEI
Publisher	SCEI, (eu) SCEE, (au) SCE Australia
Release date	(as) August 4, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1-4 Players

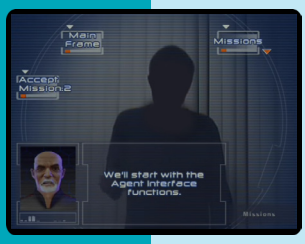
EyeToy: Monkey Mania, also known as Saru Eye Toy Oosawagi: Wakki Waki Game Tenkomori!! in Asia, Japan, and Korea, is a party game. It is based on Ape Escape and the monkeys in the game are guided through 50 minigames. Up to four players can play together.

The game was available with a silver camera or without for those who may already have the EyeToy.

J P

EyeToy: Operation Spy

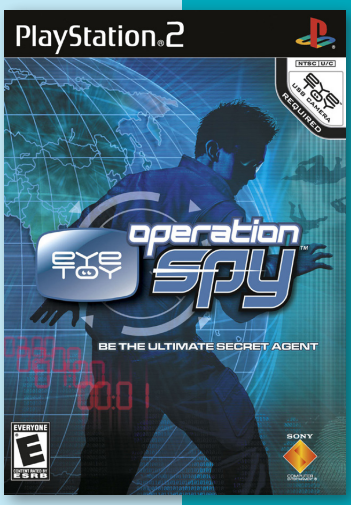
5.3



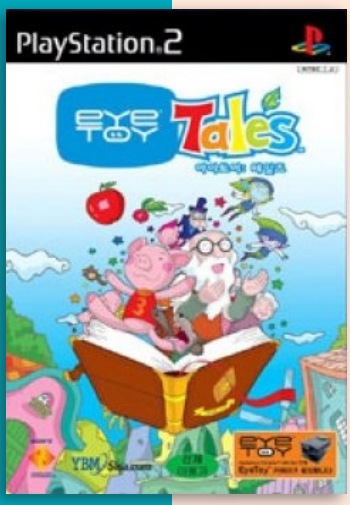
N P

Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA
Release date	(eu) October 14, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

EyeToy: Operation Spy (also known as SpyToy in PAL regions) uses the EyeToy camera peripheral to detect player movements. The main objective of the game is to guard a room from an intruder. Unique features include new face recognition technology, new video messaging, and interactive missions. If an intruder is caught, the next time the player returns to the room they can watch the recorded video of who came in.



EyeToy: Tales



Developer	SCEK, YBM Sisa.com
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(ko) March 29, 2005
Genre	Action, Party
Mode	1-4 Players

EyeToy Tales. It was developed by TBA and published by Sony Computer Entertainment for PS2. The game uses children's stories from around the world to engage kids in interactive learning activities. These include spelling, math, memory and other such edutainment mini-games.

KR

EyeToy: Play

8.0

J N P

Developer	SCEE
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(eu) July 4, 2003
Genre	Party
Mode	1-4 Players

EyeToy: Play was the first game to make use of the video camera accessory, EyeToy. The game was initially packaged with the EyeToy when the accessory was first released.

It features twelve mini-games to choose from. This game, and all other EyeToy titles, are played by moving one's body. The motion is detected by the USB camera. The software recognizes pixel changes in the video image and compares the proximity of the change to other game objects to play the game. Users who get a high score get to take a photo to tease other players.

Eye Toy: Play received a "Double Platinum" sales award from the ELSPA, indicating sales of at least 600,000 copies in the United Kingdom.

The game received "favorable" reviews according to Metacritic.

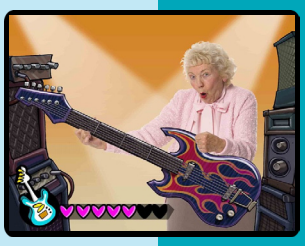
EyeToy: Play 2

Developer	SCEE
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(eu) November 5, 2004
Genre	Party
Mode	1-4 Players

EyeToy: Play 2 contains twelve new minigames, that allow for single or multi-player modes. The game also introduces a tournament mode, that allows several players to compete in a series of minigames, earning points for each game won.

The game also takes advantage of some EyeToy capabilities that the original did not, including being able to detect the speed and force of motion, and increased accuracy. This allows for more depth in games like Baseball, where points can be awarded for more forceful hitting of the ball. In addition, the game features SpyToy, enabling players to turn their EyeToy camera into a security system that will record anyone that passes by. It is possible to capture photos or record video, and record a message that will play on the television screen should anyone come within range. It also contains a demo of EyeToy: AntiGrav.

7.8



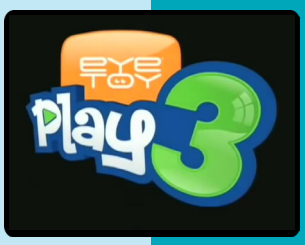
J N P

EyeToy: Play 3

6.1

Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE, (au) SCE Australia, (us) SCEA, (ko) SCEI
Release date	(eu) November 4, 2005
Genre	Party
Mode	1-4 Players

EyeToy: Play 3 is the third game in the EyeToy: Play series, for up to four players. Unlike previous EyeToy: Play games, Play 3 was not released in North America. Unlike the previous games, 4 players were able to play on screen at the same time as opposed to taking it in turns like the previous games. Alongside the games, there was also the Playroom where the player could mess around with the motion capabilities



P

Extreme Sprint 3010

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2007
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

Extreme Sprint 3010 is an action/foot racing game developed and published by Phoenix Games for the PlayStation 2.

The game takes place on Earth in the year 3010. In the post-apocalyptic wasteland an oppressive regime sets up a new violent sport of extreme sprints.

P

Eyeshield 21: AmeFoot Yarouze! Ya! Ha!

7.8

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) December 22, 2005
Genre	Sports, Action
Mode	1-2 Players

Eyeshield 21: AmeFoot Yarouze! Ya! Ha! is a PlayStation 2 game based on the football anime Eyeshield 21. It tells the story of Sena Kobayakawa, an introverted boy who joins an American football club under the pseudonym of “Eyeshield 21”.

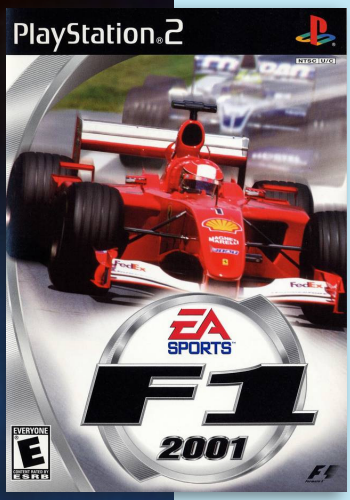
The game mixes different genres, including visual novel, card game, sports game and mini-games.

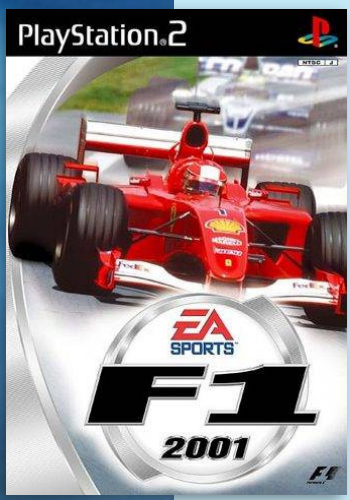
J

PS2
PlayStation.2

F1 2001

8.3





J N P

Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (jp) Electronic Arts Victor
Release date	(jp) September 20, 2001
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

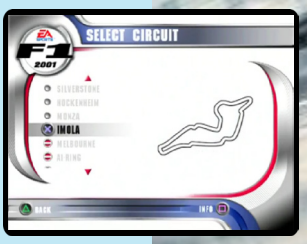
EA Sports F1 2001 is an EA Sports game based on the 2001 Formula One season. It is a sequel to the 2000 video game F1 2000 (and the successor to the 2000 video game F1 Championship Season 2000) and was the second title in the EA Sports F1 series.

The gameplay focuses on a new training mode which allows players to improve their skills and eventually be able to unlock new modes as the progress of training is made. For the first time in a Formula One game, there is a training mode where players can hone their skills on the track.

All F1 2001 game teams and drivers based on 2001 Formula One season teams and drivers lineup. Pedro De La Rosa was featured on EA Sports F1 2001 game but not featured on rival SCE Studio Liverpool game Formula One 2001 and as well F1 Career Challenge console versions for 2001 season mode.

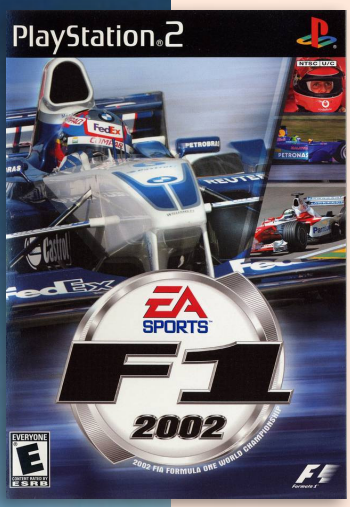
The developers had collaborated with insiders who worked for BAR to help capture the essence of real life Formula One racing who provided real-life motion captures, feedback from key members of the race teams which became part of the game. The executive producer for the game John Rostron said *"We wanted to stretch the boundaries of motor sports gaming and shake up the racing genre all together"*. The game utilizes the same Engine used in F1 Championship Season 2000. The developers made alterations to the physics model of the cars to make the cars to make them react better to minor collisions and changes in the track surface. For track modelling, the reflections from buildings situated around the circuits were designed to be more reliastic. The shadow code was rewritten allowing increased contrast to the shadows of objects. A new dynamic shadow system was added to move the location of a shadow which was dependent on the sun's position for weather changes.

The game was well received by critics and received a nomination from GameSpot for their Driving Game of the Year.



F1 2002

8.1



Developer	Visual Sciences
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (us) EA Sports
Release date	(jp) June 6, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Every track, driver, team and pit crew from the official F1 2002 competition are included in this, the '02 version of the long standing EA F1 series.

Players can drive in a full season, a single race, test sessions (where they can modify their cars setup to increase the cars speed, handling, etc and test them under normal racing conditions) and training, where they can learn the basics and more advanced areas of Formula 1 racing.

J N P

F1 Career Challenge

7.0

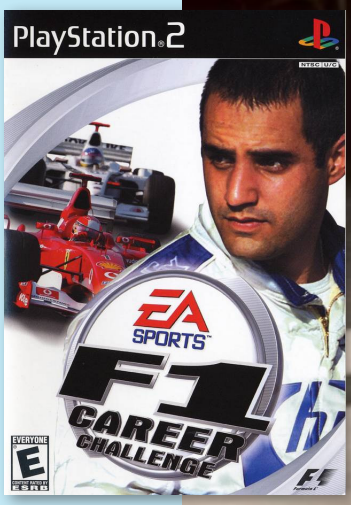
J N P

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(jp) July 17, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

F1 Challenge '99-'02 spans four entire championship seasons and features accurate team, vehicle, and driver data for each.

Across the four racing seasons, F1 Challenge '99-'02 features 14 different teams, 44 different vehicles, and 17 of the world's most famous racing circuits - some of which have slightly different configurations, depending on the year.

"mobygames.com"



F1 Championship Season 2000

7.1

Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (jp) Electronic Arts Victor
Release date	(eu) December 15, 2000
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

The game feature all cars and drivers from the 2000 season. The game modes include a single race, a championship season, a custom season and a quick race.

In European copies of the game, when the player overtakes the car ahead, the latter will accelerate, especially in corners, beyond the difficulty level chosen.

The game received an average critical response.

J N P

F1 Racing Championship

7.4

J P

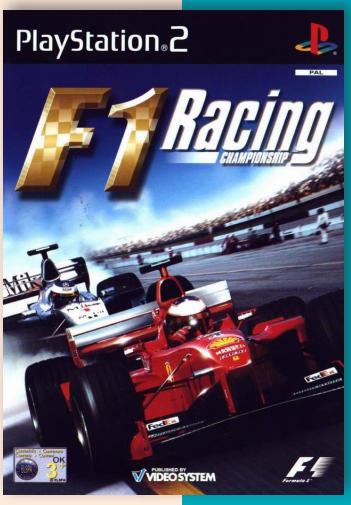
Developer	Ubisoft
Publisher	Video System
Release date	(eu) March 16, 2001
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

F1 Racing Championship is the third Ubi Soft F1 racing simulation game, published with the FIA license by Video System. It features official tracks, drivers and cars of the 1999 F1 season.

The game is based on a new engine bringing a real technological step compared to the two first titles (F1 Racing Simulation and Monaco Grand Prix Racing Simulation 2).

Available game modes are Single Race, Grand Prix, Championship, Private Trials and Time Attack. The tracks were modelled in 3D from GPS data sampled on the real roads. There are realistic physics, a telemetry system to analyse behaviour of your car and to tune its settings, complex driving AI, recordable replays, strategy management with animated pit sequences, and weather simulation.

"mobygames.com"



Falling Stars

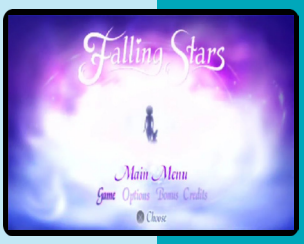
Developer	Ivolgamus
Publisher	Ivolgamus, (us) Agetec
Release date	(eu) August 31, 2007
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Falling Stars is a role-playing game developed by Ivolgamus. It was originally released in August, 2007 for Windows and later ported to PS2. The game is aimed at young children and was released with a price point lower than most PS2 games.

In Falling Stars, players control Luna, a young girl who lives in Dazzleon. Luna's uncle, Matt, discovers a curious mine and decides to take up residence in Dazzleon to investigate. The mine slowly takes over Matt's mind and he begins to perform evil experiments. Eventually, Matt turns on his pets, changing them all into evil monsters. Realizing her uncle's madness, Luna sets out to save him save the world from dire consequences.

As the player uncovers the mysteries of Dazzleon, they must participate in seven unique mini-games, train their own pet, dress Luna in an assortment of outfits, and battle a variety of monsters.

3.2



N P

F: Fanatic

5.8

Developer	Princess Soft
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) July 29, 2004
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

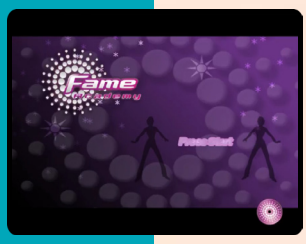
F: Fanatic is a horror visual novel set in a fictional 19th century London. The player takes on a role of a young newspaper journalist following the case involving a series of murders. Someone is killing young ladies in a manner that closely resembles that of the infamous Jack the Ripper. As players dig deeper into the story they realize that supernatural element is also involved.

"mobygames.com"

J

Fame Academy

6.0

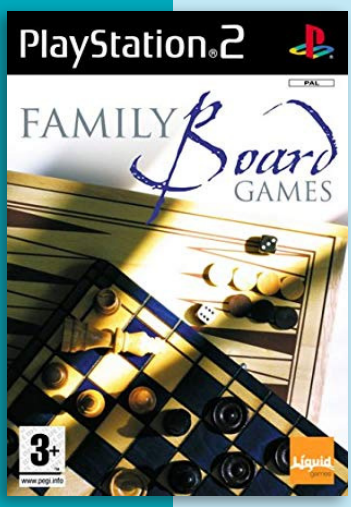


P

Developer	WideScreen Games
Publisher	Monte Cristo Multimedia
Release date	(eu) November 21, 2003
Genre	Music, Simulation
Mode	1-4 Players

Fame Academy is licensed game about the eponymous TV show where the player controls the show's winner. It is a variant of The Sims, which means players has to take care of the character's needs. At first they furnishes the candidate's house. The candidate also has to train for his career: Tutors give tasks which have to be fulfilled in a certain time, e.g. singing. Mostly the player has to buy items like a microphone for this.

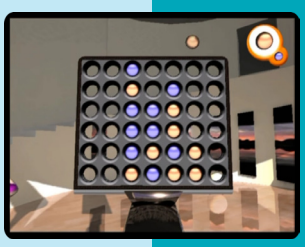
Family Board Games



Developer	Mere Mortals
Publisher	Liquid Games
Release date	(eu) January 27, 2006
Genre	Board
Mode	1-2 Players

Family Board Games is a board game compilation, developed by Mere Mortals and published by Liquid Games, which was only released in Europe in 2006.

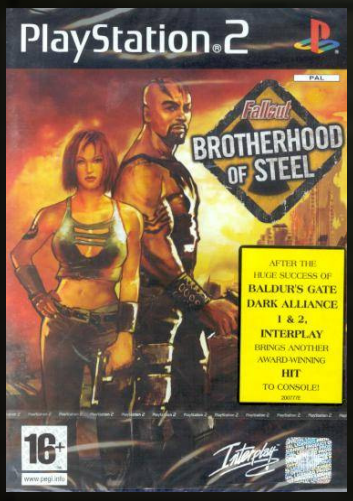
The game include Chess, Backgammon, Draughts, Reversi, Four-In-A-Row and also a Mastermind-style game.

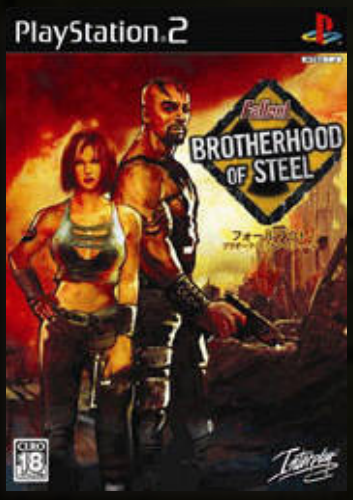


P

Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel

6.4





Developer	Interplay
Publisher	Interplay, (eu) Avalon Interactive
Release date	(us) January 14, 2004
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1-2 Players

Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel is an action role-playing game released for the Xbox and PlayStation 2. Brotherhood of Steel was the fourth video game to be set in the Fallout universe. It was also the first to be made for consoles, and the last to be made during Interplay's initial run on the series, before the rights passed to Bethesda Softworks.

The game chronicles the adventures of an initiate in the Brotherhood of Steel, a militant quasi-religious organization that has come to power in a post-apocalyptic world. The game takes place in Carbon, Texas in the year 2208. The player character chooses to control one of three initial characters: Cain, Cyrus or Nadia.

Because of numerous inconsistencies with previous Fallout games, Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel has been declared as non-canon by Bethesda Softworks, though some elements do not contradict it and its content can be used as "flavor" material.

As a spinoff, Brotherhood of Steel's gameplay greatly differs from that of other Fallout games. The gameplay is linear, not open-world. Instead of being able to travel freely across a broad world full of places and events as in other Fallout games, the player is confined to one location at a time. Previously visited locations cannot be visited again, and new locations can only be discovered by advancing the story. There are 50 distinct zones of varying size in Brotherhood of Steel.

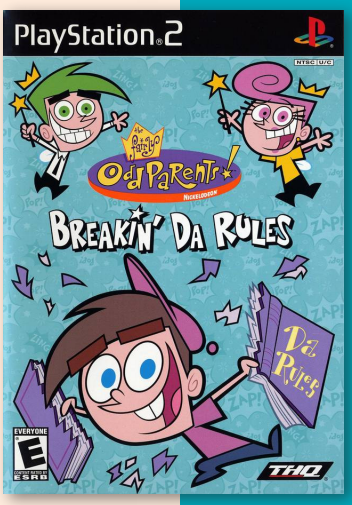
Brotherhood of Steel uses many of the same mechanics as other entries in the Fallout series, including the SPECIAL (Strength, Perception, Endurance, Charisma, Intelligence, Agility, Luck) attribute assignment system. These seven attributes are assigned numeric values and govern most interactions in the game. Unlike other Fallout games, however, the values are constant for each character rather than customizable.

Skills exist in this game, but they do not behave like skills in other Fallout games. Rather, they are analogous to perks. When the player levels up, they receive "skill points" to increase the power of skills. Some skills also have level restrictions.

Fallout
BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL
EAT
PARK

The Fairly OddParents! Breakin' Da Rules

6.0

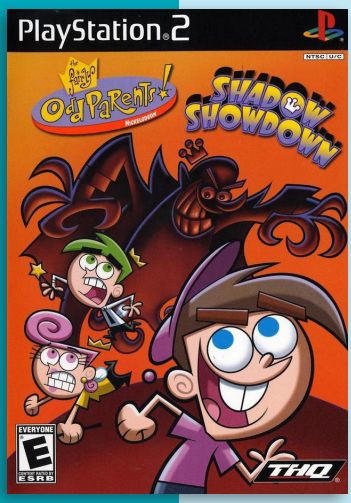


Developer	Blitz Games
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) November 3, 2003
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

In the game players take control of Timmy Turner and have to retrieve pages from a rulebook through a variety of environments ranging from cyberspace to a medieval castle. Gameplay includes platforming, defeating enemies and puzzle solving. As well as collecting wish stars and crowns. All levels are accessed from different objects in the house.

The Fairly OddParents! Shadow Showdown

6.1



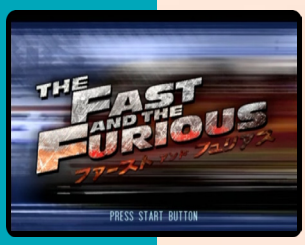
Developer	THQ
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) September 8, 2004
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1-2 Players

When the TV goes out just as the season finale of Crash Nebula starts, Timmy Turner asks his Fairy Godparents for a little help. When they find their magic is gone, they quickly find out The Shadow is responsible.

An Xbox version of the game was planned, but was later cancelled due to low sales of Breakin' da Rules' Xbox release.

The Fast and the Furious

5.9

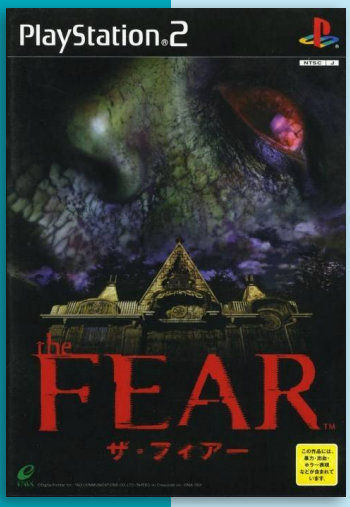


Developer	Eutechnyx
Publisher	Namco Bandai Games, (au) EA Games
Release date	(us) September 26, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

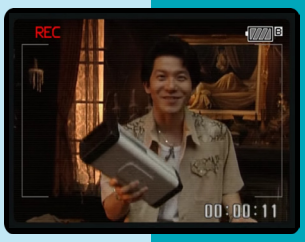
Based on the movie The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift, the game puts players in the shoes of a rookie trying to make it in the world of drift racing. As in the movie, the game is set on the streets of Tokyo and stars some of the same characters and their cars. At first, players don't have a lot of cash, but as they win more races and earn more money, they'll able to upgrade, customize their vehicle into a drifting machine.

The Fear

7.0



Developer	Digital Frontier
Publisher	Enix Corporation
Release date	Action-adventure
Genre	(jp) July 26, 2001
Mode	1 Player



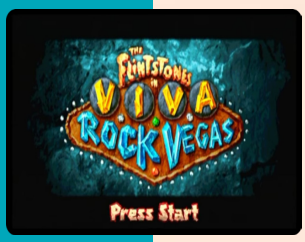
"The Fear" is an interactive movie in the true sense of the word. Featuring live actors and full-motion video, the game occupies 4 DVDs. Unlike many other interactive movies, players actually have control over their actions in "The Fear". Players can move from first-person perspective, each movement being shown as a full-motion video. There are also puzzles to solve and short action sequences.

"mobygames.com"

J

The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas

7.0



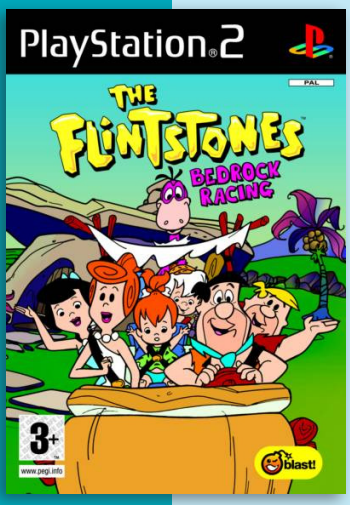
P

Developer	Toka
Publisher	Swing! Deutschland, (jp) Idea Factory
Release date	(eu) July 6, 2001
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

The game is a cart Racer based on the second Flintstones Movie. It feature eight racetracks (can also be raced mirrored or reverse), 9 different vehicles, diverse weapons and power ups, several drivers to choose from (Barney, Fred, Wilma, Chip Rockefella etc.), and a multitude of different game modes such as bomb hunt, where the player needs to pass along a bomb before it explodes.

The Flintstones: Bedrock Racing

6.5



Developer	Coyote Console
Publisher	Blast! Entertainment Ltd.
Release date	(eu) October 2, 2007
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

The Flintstones: Bedrock Racing was developed by Coyote for PS2. The game feature 8 different Flintstones character, each with their own unique vehicle, and 12 unique tracks.

In the game Fred and Barney must compete to discover who's got the fastest family in Bedrock.

P

Fantastic Fortune 2

7.6

J

Developer	GeneX
Publisher	GeneX
Release date	(jp) June 26, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Fantastic Fortune 2 is a romance simulation game. In this otome game the protagonist is one of the three female characters: Aoi (a 16-year old priestess summoned from another world), Marine (a 15 16-year old), or Aqua (a 13-year old with a memory loss). The story takes place in a fantasy setting and it unfolds during a seven month training period where you try to become a "Daughter of Star".

But aside from trying to train to become a "Daughter of Star", each of the three girls has another goal they aspire to. Aoi is trying to return to her home world. Aqua is trying to regain her memory. And Marine is trying to find a man she met at a young age. During the training period, players can upgrade their character's various skills such as charisma, fortune (monetary), music, construction, speech, and many other among close to 30 different skills. When players are not training, they can explore the city and talk to characters they meet in an adventure mode common to visual novels.

"mobygames.com"

Fantastic Fortune 2: Triple Star

Developer	GeneX
Publisher	GeneX CyberFront
Release date	(jp) March 3, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

8.0

J

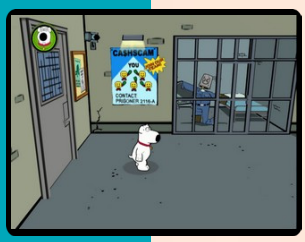
Fantastic Fortune 2: Triple Star is an updated version of the PlayStation 2 release, Fantastic Fortune 2.

The game once again feature the three girls, Marine, Aqua and Aoi, and play as her through a seven month training period as players work to become the "Star Girl."

The major difference on this title is the Gaiden mode, where players can play a side story of the main game that feature the past and the future in a third party position. The character selection screen and the conversation screen have been also been improved.

Family Guy

5.0



Developer	High Voltage Software
Publisher	2K Games
Release date	(us) October 2, 2006
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Family Guy Video Game! is an action-adventure game based on the American animated television series Family Guy.

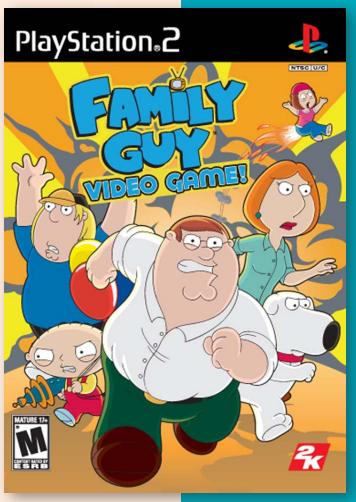
The game is split into 22 levels for the three playable characters: Peter, Stewie or Brian. Peter and Stewie have eight levels, while Brian has six. Each character has his own unique style of play.

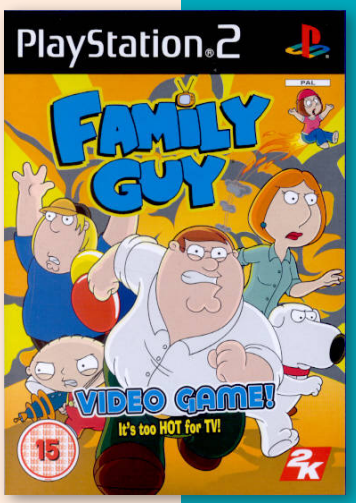
Peter's levels have a beat 'em up style. The player rampages across a section of town, attacking anyone and anything in his path. In addition, depending on the player's progression through the game, Peter will adopt a different persona as a result of head trauma, giving his attacks different animations but otherwise similar results. Peter's alter egos are Rufus Griffin, Hooker Peter and A.N.N.A. (Automaton Nuclear Neo-human Android).

Stewie's levels resemble a shoot 'em up like Galaga or Space Invaders, but also with similarities to games like the Futurama game. Stewie uses his upgradeable laser gun and conveniently placed "sky hooks" to move through various stages.

Brian's levels have more in common with stealth games like Hitman and Splinter Cell. Brian must avoid detection by those around him, and can adopt disguises to fool onlookers. A secondary element in Brian's levels is avoiding his natural urge to urinate on things. Should the player remain near certain objects for too long (potted plants, fire hydrants, etc.), Brian will be forced to pee on them, exposing himself to those around him.

A key feature of the game are mini-games done in the same style as the cutaway gags that the show is famous for, usually lasting less than 10 seconds. The mini-games often repeat cutaway gags from the shows, such as Peter inexplicably burning his hand in a waffle iron. Successfully completing the mini-game offers a bonus: Brian becomes invisible for a short period, while Peter and Stewie receive power-ups for their respective abilities.

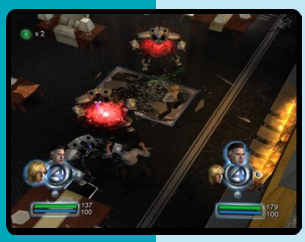




N P

Fantastic 4

6.4



N P

Developer	7 Studios
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) June 27, 2005
Genre	Beat 'em up, Action-adventure
Mode	1-2 Players

This game is a licensee of the 2005 movie "Fantastic 4". Unlike many licensed titles, this third-person action game in the vein of the Onimusha or Devil May Cry series only takes the base of its plot from the actual movie, then liberally changes it to make for better gameplay.

The gameplay usually consists of walking the title characters around a level and beating up the various enemies that cross their path. There are mission objectives, but usually the only way to achieve them leads through the enemies and just as usually the only way to fail them is to be overwhelmed by the enemies. Beating up enemies yields points, which can be used to upgrade characters with new special moves or unlock various bonus materials.

"mobygames.com"

Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer

3.6

Developer	7 Studios
Publisher	Take-Two Interactive, (au) 2K Games
Release date	(us) June 15, 2007
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1-4 Players

Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer is based on the film of the same name and stars the Marvel Comics characters Fantastic Four and the Silver Surfer.

The game allows the player to take on the role of any member of the Fantastic Four team and to switch characters at any time. Each of the characters has a special ability.

During the game, the player will also face enemies from the Fantastic Four universe, such as Silver Surfer, Terrax, Red Ghost, Super-Skrull, and Dr. Doom.

In addition to missions featuring the whole team, there are various solo missions during the game, such as the Human Torch chasing the Silver Surfer through New York and Sue Storm using her invisibility powers to sneak through a Military Base.

N P

Family Feud

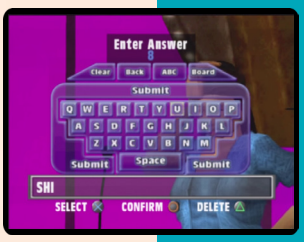
3.3

Developer	Ingram Entertainment
Publisher	Global Star Software
Release date	(us) October 12, 2006
Genre	Trivia
Mode	1-2 Players

Family Feud is a simulation of the TV game show of the same name. Two families will compete against each other to choose the most common answers to questions such as “Things a jockey needs”, or “Clothes that don’t go on hangers”. More than 1000 questions are included.

The game has both standard and quick games. The standard game contains 5 rounds. Two people are selected, one from each team, who compete to buzz in a common answer to the question on the board. The quick game has just one family, who has to guess the common answers to a question. Finding all answers earns bonus points.

The standard game can be played against the AI, another player, or over the Internet. By playing the game, new clothing options and studios will be unlocked.



N

Fantavision

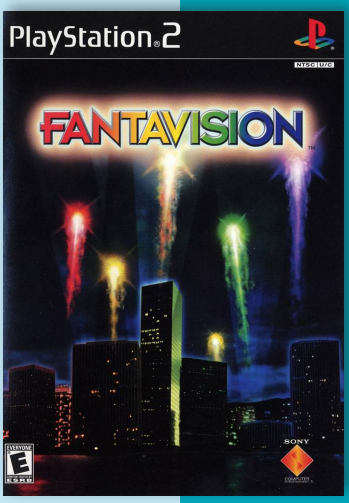
7.2

J N P

Developer	SCEJ
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(jp) March 9, 2000
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1-2 Players

Fantavision was released as a launch title for the PlayStation 2. It is a real-time puzzle game involving fireworks. It relies on quick color matching and symbol recognition skills. A two-player versus mode is also in the game.

Fantavision was at first a tech demo for the PlayStation 2, but it surprised many as something that actually could be a game, resulting in its release. Initially, the game was released in Japan, only featuring single-player mode. The American and European releases of the game were released with two-player mode support. The music from the Japanese version consists of electronic music composed by Soichi Terada, while the North American version uses a mix of electronic and new age music composed by Ashif Hakik, and the European version, composed by Jim Croft, containing mostly dance music.



7.4

JNP

Fatal Frame

Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo, (eu) Wanadoo, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) December 13, 2001
Genre	Survival horror
Mode	1 Player

Fatal Frame, released as Zero in Japan and Project Zero in Europe, is the first installment in the Fatal Frame series. An enhanced port for the Xbox was released in 2002. It was re-released in North America on the PlayStation Network in 2013.

Set in 1986, the story follows siblings Miku and Mafuyu Hinasaki. When Mafuyu disappears while searching for a famous novellist in the haunted Himuro Mansion, his sister Miku goes to find him. During her exploration of the mansion, she discovers clues as to the fate of those who entered, must fight hostile ghosts, and discover the truth behind a dark ritual that took place there.

Fatal Frame is a survival horror set within an abandoned Japanese mansion, divided into four chapters and a prologue which act as levels and tutorial respectively. The player controls Miku Hinasaki for the majority of the game, with its opening featuring Miku's brother Mafuyu as the player character. Each part of the mansion includes a map of its layout, and each level is rendered in real-time instead of using pre-rendered backgrounds. During navigation, players guide the characters through multiple rooms, each with a semi-fixed camera perspective that changes depending on a character's position. Environments are invariably dark, with exploration being possible through the use of a flashlight. During exploration, various items can be found scattered through environments: these include documents and cassette recordings expanding on elements of the story, health items, and other objects. In some areas, the main character must also solve puzzles to progress. Progress is saved at savepoints through the mansion, and at the end of each chapter.

Hostile ghosts can only be fought using the Camera Obscura, an antique camera that can capture ghosts. Ghosts in environments are sensed using a character's "sixth sense", and will drain a character's health on contact. When using the Camera, the view switches to a first-person view: the Camera Obscura is moved with the right analog stick on a controller, while the character can be moved with the left stick while maintaining a view through the Camera. Holding a ghost in view enables greater damage, but ghosts fade in and out of view as they approach. The most damage is dealt when the ghost is very close. The amount of damage taken is converted into points, which are used to upgrade the camera for faster reload time or greater damage with each shot, or adding secondary powers such as staggering ghosts when shooting them. Points are also gained by photographing benign ghosts that appear in set spots around the mansion. Film, the Camera's ammunition, can be found throughout the mansion or be replenished at a save point: it comes in various grades, with higher-quality grades dealing higher damage while consequently being rarer.

The concept for the game came to future director Makoto Shibata shortly after he finished work on

Tecmo's Deception: Invitation to Darkness. The concept came to Shibata inspired by his own dreams and encounters with what he felt were supernatural occurrences. Development began when the PlayStation 2 hardware was first introduced to Tecmo, under the codename "Project Zero". One of the things they drew inspiration from was the positive reception of polygon characters in the Silent Hill series, using this to go a step further and create the sense of seeing things off-screen. The ultimate goal was to create as frightening an atmosphere as possible. The staff included multiple developers from the Deception series. According to character designer and CGI director Jin Hasegawa, the game's key colors are black and white: white represented hope, while black represented fear. During early development, a large amount of effort went into adjusting the lighting and shading, with the most obvious in-game representation of the key colors and desired effect being Miku's torch piercing the darkness inside the mansion. In addition to black and white, a third key color represented through Miku's clothing was red, representing life. The composer and sound director was Shigekiyo Okuda. During the concept development, one of the main concepts was using stereophonic sound to reinforce the atmosphere. Due to the nature of the project, Okuda considered it important that they convey a three-dimensional feeling using sound projected from both left and right. After testing out multiple middleware and commercial sound tools, the team settled on Arnis Sound Technologies.

The setting of the game in a classical Japanese mansion originated from Shibata's early ideas for settings within the Deception series, although these ideas were passed over as it limited the possibilities for the series' trap-setting gameplay. When creating the atmosphere, the team watched both high and low-budget Japanese horror films, and war films. The story was the first part of the game to be completed. The setting was originally going to be in the then-present day, but as the team wanted to create a feeling of isolation through a lack of modern technology such as mobile phones, the setting was changed to the 1980s. Some scenes were considered too graphic for the game and were cut: two cited examples were a flashback showing the head of the Himuro house committing seppuku, and another was a scene showing Kirie being torn apart during the Strangling Ritual. The way the Holy Mirror was broken also made a deliberate reference to how the ritual pulled the body into five pieces. While rituals form a core part of the story, the development team had little to no experience with such things. For inspiration, Shibata used similar motifs of spirituality in Yōkai Hunter, a manga written by Daijiro Moro-

hoshi. The Camera Obscura was not in the initial discussions between Shibata and Kikuchi, with the original idea being that ghosts would be avoided and repelled by light. Ultimately, they decided to have a type of offensive power, which resulted in the Camera's creation. Kikuchi was initially opposed to the idea, but saw that it fitted very well into the game's context as development progressed. The Camera's design was based on a German military camera.

In some copies of the game for the PS2, there is a game breaking bug in which Mafuyu is unable to use the camera. It is impossible to advance without the use of the camera and there is no known fix for it rendering the game completely unplayable.

The game was first announced in July 2001 for a winter release under the provisional title "Project Zero". The game's Japanese title was inspired by the nature of the game's enemies as *"beings of nothingness"*, along with it representing the state of someone being at their utmost during a decisive moment. It could also be read alternately as "zero" and "ghost". As part of the promotion campaign, two special giveaways were created and sold through Japanese media store Tsutaya: headphones given away to winners of a lottery, and a trial version available to rent. In addition to this, a novelization written from the point of view of Mafuyu was published by ASCII Media Works.

It was first announced for a release in North America in January 2002. In Europe, it was published by Wanadoo, a publishing company based in France. Wanadoo had their eye on the game since its Japanese release, and took charge of its translation and promotion for the region. The title was marketed in the west as being based on a true story. While this was not true in itself, elements of the story were based on real haunted locations and local Japanese legends. Two cited examples were a haunted mansion said to be the site of numerous murders, and the legend of a tree from which a woman hanged herself when forcefully separated from her lover.

In its debut week in Japan, Fatal Frame sold 22,000 units, the lowest debut sales of the series. Its lifetime sales in the country have reached 42,000 units, also making it the lowest-selling title up to that point. Upon release on the PlayStation 2 in Europe, it sold 12,000 copies. According to an interview with Kikuchi and Shibata, the game was an unexpected success in both North America and Europe. The two attributed this to the recent popularity of Japanese horror films like Ring.

Famitsu praised the use of the Camera Obscura in creating a sense of tension in combination with the sound and visual design. IGN's David Smith, while noting some difficulties with the controls, generally praised its atmosphere and gameplay, saying that *"Horror fans are advised to pick this one up at their leisure, and even the jaded might find something to renew their interest in the genre"*. Chris Baker of 1UP.com similarly praised the atmosphere and enjoyed the gameplay, particularly noting its ability to make him feel like a newcomer to gaming with its late-game difficulty spike. Eurogamer's Rob Fahey, while initially wary of the game, was impressed by the game, calling it *"compelling and utterly addictive"* and citing multiple parallels with Ring. GamePro was less enthusiastic, saying that it did not hold up well alongside games like Silent Hill.

PROJECT ZERO 2: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY

by: PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) 2004 June #26

The Lost Village is harder to escape than Raccoon City or Silent Hill

Survial-Horror Games 101: zombies, guns, blood and rabid dobermans should be guaranteed inclusions, Sadly, this has started to come true with less-than-original companies using Capcom's "tried and true" formula just one too many times. Tecmo, on the other hand, is set to return with their original, trippy freak-fest *Project Zero 2: Crimson Butterfly*.

Crimson Butterfly is the prequel to the largely unnoticed, but equally brilliant (for its time) *Project Zero*. Even in its almost-complete state, *Crimson Butterfly* is more disturbing than *Resident Evil* or *Silent Hill*. It's a mind-bender, with fantastically edited cutscenes and gameplay utilising inner fears rather gore; cameras rather than guns and lost souls rather than creatures to propel its heart-thumping story alone.

Without the need to blow away enemies with a sawn-off, *Crimson Butterfly* uses cameras (here, a "Camera Obscura") to see them off. It may seen innocent, but it's *more* disturbing, given the fact that you are shooting and stealing the souls of lost spirits.

The game kicks off with you - Mio - and your twin Mayu who has been in an accident that has left her with a limp and scarred leg. This is the inevitable point where you realise that everything is not as it seems and where things start to escalate. Mayu becomes entranced by a crimson butterfly that lures her deep into the forest. You follow her and stumbles on

"The Lost Village" - a village that no one was sure actually existed. Tecmo have proven that they are true masters of creating mood. Like the original *The Ring* movie, *Crimson Butterfly* has a typical Japanese horror movie feel.

As the gameplay itself isn't completely free-roaming, you are confined to buildings, paths and areas. This however, is almost always used in horror games where propelling the story along is crucial, otherwise the all-important tension could be lost.

The gripes that are proving to be more annoying at the moment are the fact that Mayu often gets in your way and you are unable to move very quickly. At best, your running speed is a very slow jog - we're hoping that Tecmo will address this in the final version as it's brilliant in almost every other department.

Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly

Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo, (eu) Ubisoft, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) November 27, 2003
Genre	Survival horror
Mode	1 Player

Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly, known in Europe as Project Zero II: Crimson Butterfly, is the second installment in the Fatal Frame series, and features an independent story with little relation to the first title. The story follows twin sisters Mio and Mayu Amakura as they explore an abandoned village and experience encounters with the paranormal. Their lives quickly become threatened when the village spirits begin to possess the pair and target them as sacrifices for an ancient ritual.

Fatal Frame II uses gameplay mechanics very similar to its predecessor, with some changes and updates. For most of the game players controls Mio Amakura, except for some short scenes where they controls her elder twin sister Mayu. Mio's only weapon is the Camera Obscura, an antique camera with the ability to take pictures of ghosts and exorcise them. Like in the previous game, special film types and lenses can be found that increase the damage it can deal. The camera's native functions and the special lenses can be upgraded using Spirit Orb's found in the game and points earned from photographing ghosts. The camera also features an unique filament which glows red when facing a hostile ghost or blue when there is a non-hostile ghost nearby.

During the game, Mio has to explore the entire village area and its central buildings, and needs to find various objects and solve puzzles in order to advance. In addition to hostile ghosts, there are numerous vanishing and hidden spirits Mio can photograph to receive clues or reveal the story of the village. The game is divided into chapters, mostly related to certain areas which Mio visits as she chases after her sister. The total number of chapters is nine, with a special tenth chapter available in hard and nightmare difficulty settings.

The game has a new game plus feature, where the player can start a new game while keeping its camera with all the special functions, lenses and upgrades from the previous playthrough, as well as all the stored health supports and film. Over multiple playthroughs the player can unlock various bonus content, including a mission mode,

different outfits, gallery features and special lenses for the camera. In mission mode, the player is presented with a challenge, usually to kill certain ghosts as quickly as possible or getting the highest points possible.

While the English translation of the game is generally of high quality, one important thing could not be carried over from the original Japanese. In Japanese, Mio calls Mayu "Onee-chan", meaning literally "big sister", clearly indicating the order of the twins. While this is perfectly normal in Japanese, it would sound odd in English, and therefore Mio calls Mayu by her name instead. Because of this, there isn't anything in the English translation that would tell the player which of the twins is the elder, while in Japanese it was clear that Mio was the younger and therefore destined to be sacrificed - until the revelation near the end that in the village's tradition the twin order is reversed, and Mio's fate is to sacrifice her sister instead. This revelation is largely lost in the translation.

Development of a sequel to the original Fatal Frame began *"relatively soon"* after its release. Many players were too scared to finish the first game, so for the sequel, Tecmo shifted their attention to create a more interesting storyline to encourage players to see it through. Despite this, Fatal Frame II was developed with "horror" being the central focus more-so than the "action". Producer Keisuke Kikuchi and director of the Xbox port, Zin Hasegawa, called it *"horror that appeals to human imagination"*, citing how some people get scared when hearing faint sounds in the dark. Kikuchi cited symmetry as a central theme in the story, in that, *"tragedies and fear are based on what happens when you tear things apart,"* such as butterflies and twins.

In creating the horror atmosphere, they considered more closely how spirits may behave. They may randomly disappear or reappear in different locations, and their presence can sometimes still be felt after they are killed. Shibata called these *"never-endings loops"* characteristic of a horror scenario, and this illusion was something he felt in a dream which he was using as inspiration for the game's story. Kikuchi took his inspiration from movies, literature, and also traditions and customs. He specifically cited Japanese novelist Seishi Yokomizo and Stanley Kubrick's The Shining as inspirations.

The decision to make an Xbox port of Fatal Frame II was not made until after release of the PlayStation 2 version and during planning of Fatal Frame III. The Xbox port featured enhanced graphics with better lighting techniques, and also a Dolby Digital audio option was added. Additional gameplay modes were also added, First-Person Shooter Mode and Survival Mode, and more costumes as well. Kikuchi considers this version to be "Fatal Frame 2.5".

Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly has received positive reviews from critics.

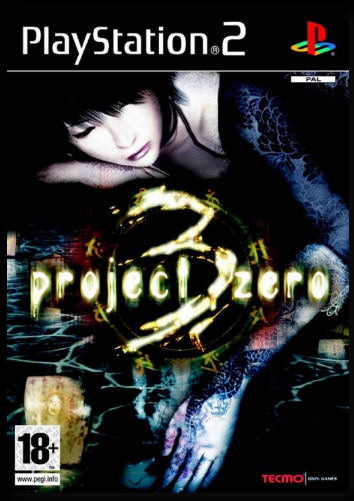
Fatal Frame II was ranked second in GameTrailers' "Top Ten Scariest Games" in 2006, and third in X-Play's "Top Ten Scariest Games of All Time". Game Informer also ranked it number one on a similar list. Ars Technica published an article about the game in its 2011 Halloween Masterpieces series, while PSU.com in 2003 opined Fatal Frame II was the scariest video game ever made.

"fatalframe.wikia.com"

Fatal Frame III: The Tormented

Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo, (eu) Ubisoft, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) July 28, 2005
Genre	Survival horror
Mode	1 Player

7.8



Fatal Frame III: The Tormented, known in Japan as Zero: Shisei no Koe and in Europe as Project Zero 3: The Tormented, the third installment in the Fatal Frame series, as well as the direct sequel to the first and second game.

Unlike the previous games, Fatal Frame III mainly takes place in the protagonists' dreams. While the main protagonist is awake, however, the player has the freedom to explore her home.

The game focuses on Rei Kurosawa, a photographer who has recently lost her fiancé, Yuu Asou, in a tragic accident. Rei sees Yuu while taking photos of an old manor, however, and decides to follow him. In doing so, she falls under the curse of manor, where survivors of a disaster are tormented in their sleep by the ghosts of the dead.

Like the previous game, Fatal Frame III features a dominant color throughout. The dominant color in this game is a luminescent but somber blue, signifying the themes of dreams and ethereal slumber.

Fatal Frame III is similar to the previous two games, in that the player controls the character of either Rei, Miku or Kei and uses the Camera Obscura to photograph clues and fight off ghosts. Like the previous games, it is also separated into phases, here called "Hours", and between hours the player is able to look around Rei's home during the day and gather research, before going to bed at night and entering the dream manor. One key difference is that certain photos taken in the mansion can be captured as Musty Film in the real world, where it can be developed in Rei's dark room and used to gather information. After each "Hour", Rei wakes up back in the real world, however, as the plot proceeds the lines between the two worlds begin to blur for Rei. As a result, she starts to have visions of ghosts even when awake and the mysterious tattoo grows to cover an ever-increasing percentage of her body.

The basic controls and mechanics have remained generally the same; there is a filament on-screen that indicates the presence of a ghost and the camera can be raised to enter Viewfinder Mode to investigate or to battle. The filament has

an added capability, however. In addition to indicating whether the ghost is hostile or not, the filament also turns blue when a wandering ghost is unaware of the player's presence, and red when it knows the player's location, adding an element of stealth gameplay. The camera has a limited amount of film and thus film must constantly be stocked. Points are gained through defeating ghosts or by taking pictures of benign ghosts, and the points can go towards powering up the camera or purchasing the unlockables obtained after beating the game. Like the previous games, there are short puzzle sequences scattered throughout the game, progressively increasing in difficulty and opening up more sections of the manor as the story goes on.

In some chapters, the player has the opportunity to play as Miku or Kei. Each character has different special abilities, making each of their playing styles unique. Rei is capable of using the camera's flash to scare off some spirits, but can only use it a limited number of times. Miku has a special "Sacred Stone" charm that decreases the speed of spirits when used. Additionally, using her "Double" ability, she can double the camera's charge and damage. She can also crawl into smaller spaces and openings due to her smaller physical size. Kei, with his greater physical strength, can perform actions such as moving heavier objects or jumping from the roof of one building to another. However, as Kei's spritual capacity is weaker than that of either Rei or Miku, his camera obscura is significantly weaker and he must hide to avoid detection by spirits.

Fatal Frame III has received positive reviews from critics. GameRankings and Metacritic gave the game a 79.31% and 78/100.

The game debuted at 4th place in Japan, selling 46.671 units, but didn't become the highest sold PS2 title of the week for staying behind the PS2 games: Super Robot Wars Alpha 3 (1st place), Let's Make a Pro Baseball Team! 3 (2nd place) and Shadow Hearts: From the New World (3rd place).

"fatalframe.wikia.com"

Fatal Fury: Battle Archives Volume 1

6.8

J N P

Developer	SNK Playmore
Publisher	SNK Playmore, (eu) Ignition Entertainment
Release date	(jp) July 20, 2006
Genre	Fighting, Compilation
Mode	1-2 Players

This collection is the first release in the Fatal Fury series on the PlayStation 2. It includes: Fatal Fury, Fatal Fury 2, Fatal Fury 3: Road to the Final Victory!, and Fatal Fury Special.

All games are faithful conversions of the Neo Geo versions. Button remapping per game is supported, as well as sprite palette customization, but no progressive-scan option.

Fatal Fury: Battle Archives Volume 2

7.1

J N

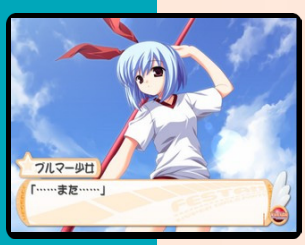
Developer	SNK Playmore
Publisher	SNK Playmore
Release date	(jp) February 22, 2007
Genre	Fighting, Compilation
Mode	1-2 Players

The second Battle Archive release bundles the 3 Real Bout Fatal Fury fighting games: Real Bout Fatal Fury, Real Bout Fatal Fury Special, and Real Bout Fatal Fury 2: The Newcomers.

The Japanese version of the game allowed players to play against other users via the KDDI Matchmaking Network. This feature was not available outside of Japan.

Festa!! Hyper Girls Party

7.8



J

Developer	Kid
Publisher	Kid
Release date	(jp) June 29, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The game tells the story of protagonist Takahiro Kuroda who returns to his hometown of Mahorobashi. While the town is quite an idyllic place, there is one major problem: Within it two warring factions do exist, one residing in the western part of town, the other in the eastern part. In between a boundary line has been drawn to keep the two factions from constantly fighting each other. This strict seperation also applies to the local school.

Fate/Stay Night Realta Nua

8.3

Developer	Kadokawa
Publisher	Kadokawa
Release date	(jp) April 19, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The player control Shirou Emiya, a wannabe sorcerer and a hopeless as mage. One day after cleaning his school's dojo, he witnesses a battle between two warriors in the courtyard. Unbeknownst to Shirou at the time, his home city of Fuyuki plays host to a hidden war where sorcerers and their servants bout it out for ownership of the Holy Grail. Whomever holds the Grail is granted the power of wishes.

J

Fate/unlimited codes

8.0

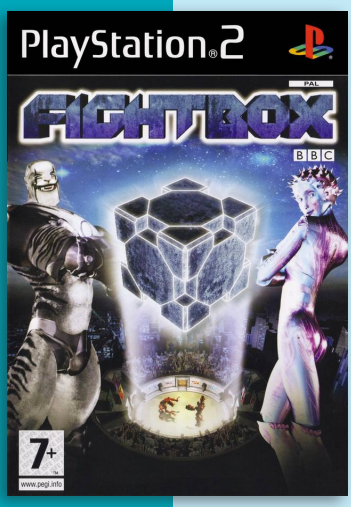
J

Developer	Eighting
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2008
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Fate/unlimited codes is a fighting game based on the visual novel Fate/stay night. The game was developed by Capcom and Cavia with the game engine supplied by Eighting. The game looks 3D but the fighters face off on a 2D plane with the occasional 3D background shift and special attacks that swivel the screen in 3D motion. The game includes a Tutorial, a Practice Mode with CPU modifiers, a Mission Mode, and an Extra Mode.

FightBox

4.7



Developer	Gamezlab
Publisher	BBC Multimedia
Release date	(eu) February 6, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1-4 Players

Players can design and build their own virtual athlete to take part in a series events against other warriors and the Sentients, to take the ultimate prize of the Fightbox, and become the 7th Sentient.

The gameplay consists of various gladitorial style events, such as fighting other warriors on moving platforms, or two warriors each trying to collect as many points from the same arena.

P

Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli

6.4

Developer	Eutechnyx
Publisher	System 3, (us) Activision
Release date	(us) August 26, 2008
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

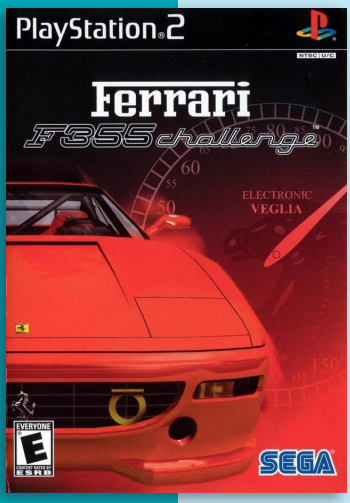
Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli is a racing game based on the Ferrari Challenge, a single-marque motorsport championship. The game includes 14 race-able tracks and Ferraris' own Fiorano test track (for training using a solitary F430 Challenge), and a vinyl editor. Driving is less arcade style and more of a simulation. It has a driving experience that is somewhere between Gran Turismo and the Need For Speed games or Race Driver: Grid.

The game primarily features the driving and racing of the Ferrari F430 Challenge, along with a series of Ferrari road and racing cars that can be unlocked.

Ferrari Challenge: Deluxe is simply a retail promotion. Publisher System 3 had to call it a different name in order to sell it "cheaper".

Ferrari F355 Challenge

7.0



Developer	TOSE
Publisher	Sega, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(jp) September 26, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

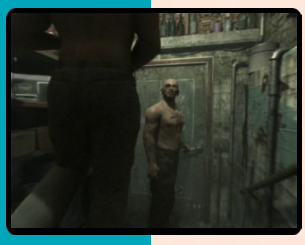
F355 Challenge, originally released on the arcades in 1999, is a racing game based on the actual race car and Ferrari event. The game was considered the most accurate simulation of the F355 possible up until that time. The only model of car featured in the game is the Ferrari F355 Challenge model.

F355 features a number of game modes: the Arcade mode which is the same as the checkpoint arcade version; Championship mode where players race a total of 6 races for the combined highest score; Single play which is the same as Arcade mode but with no time limit; and Versus play with a two player split screen.

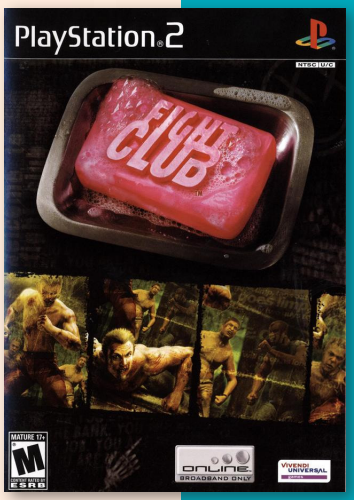
The courses that are available to race on are Motegi, short and long versions of Suzuka, Monza, Sugo, Long Beach, Atlanta Motor Speedway, Nurburgring (GP track), Laguna Seca, Sepang, and Fiorano (Ferrari's test track).

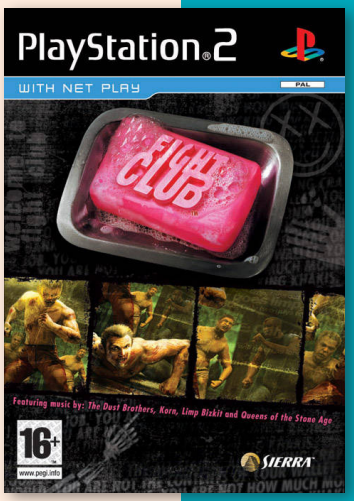
Fight Club

3.6



Developer	Genuine Games
Publisher	Vivendi Universal, (eu) Sierra Entertainment
Release date	(us) November 16, 2004
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players





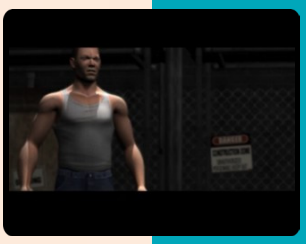
Fight Club is a fighting game based on the film Fight Club, which was based on the novel of the same name by Chuck Palahniuk.

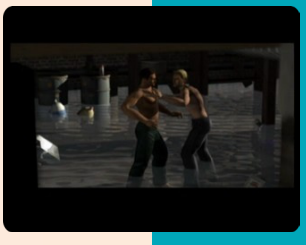
The game follows the standard formula of fighting genre games such as Street Fighter II and Tekken. In a side-view, players control one of two characters who perform various fighting moves until one is beaten. Fight Club structures the formula around the premise of the movie, where two men meet secretly to fight each other into submission. In the game, players adopt the personae of various original characters and ones from the novel and movie such as Tyler and Bob.

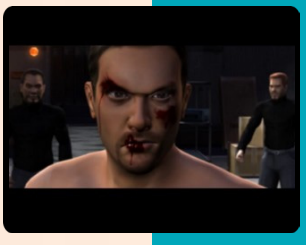
The game tries to capture the gritty feel of the movie with injuries inflicted on players and blood splattering everywhere, including onto the screen. The game tries to introduce new features into the fighting game genre. There is a Hardcore mode, where injuries are carried over from one fight to another, which could lead to the player being so injured that he is forced into retirement. The game also goes into a mode showing X-rays of the character to show bones being broken. The fighting moves are intended to be brutally violent, such as one where the opponent's arm is visibly broken at the elbow. The levels are also designed around scenes from the movie, such as Lou's bar and Paper Street.

There is a story mode, built around an original character–named only Hero–who joins Fight Club after breaking up with his girlfriend. By winning fights, the character moves up through the ranks of Fight Club and Project Mayhem to become Tyler Durden's right-hand man. Winning Story mode also unlocks Fred Durst, lead singer from Limp Bizkit, as a playable character.

The game has mostly been dismissed by fans of the novel and film as an attempt to milk the success of the story for commercial gain, and was universally panned by critics on its own merits. Critics say the game copies too much from other fighting games without bringing much new to the genre, and has repetitive fighting moves and poor animation.



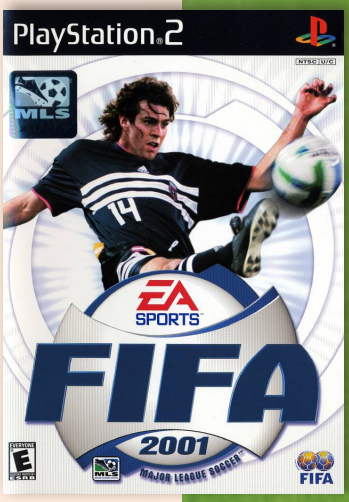




FIFA 2001

8.3

Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (jp) Electronic Arts Victor
Release date	(eu) November 21, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

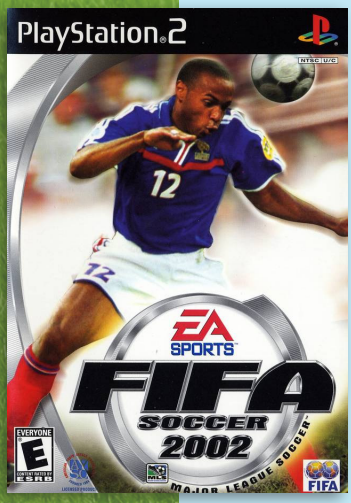


FIFA 2001 was the first game in the franchise on a 6th generation video game console. The title had a new graphics engine from FIFA Soccer World Championship which allows each team to have its own detailed kit, and for some players, their own unique faces.

Doing away with ordinary coloured pennants as club emblems, the license includes official club emblems for the first time, although certain leagues, like the Dutch league, are unlicensed. It includes 17 leagues from around the world in addition to over 50 national teams. Exhibition, Tournament, League, Cup, Season, and Training modes are available to play, ranging from simple round-robin competition to simple knock-outs to combinations of the two, and the player rosters was as up-to-date as possible.

J N P

FIFA Soccer 2002



Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (jp) Electronic Arts Victor
Release date	(us) November 1, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

8.2

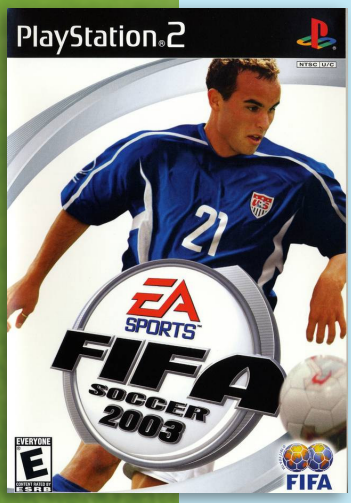
For FIFA Football 2002, power bars for passes were introduced, and dribbling reduced in order to attain a higher challenge level. The power bar can also be customised to suit the gamer's preference. The game also includes club emblems for many more European clubs as well as for major Dutch clubs such as PSV, Ajax and Feyenoord, although there was no Dutch league of any kind (they were under the "Rest of World" header). This game also features, for the first time, the Swiss Super League, at the cost of excluding the Greek League.

FIFA Football 2002 was the final game in the main series to feature the Japanese national team, as the Japan Football Association would sell its exclusive rights to Konami during 2002, thereby depriving not only FIFA, but all other football games in the market (with the exception of EA's World Cup spin-offs), from using its lineup and likeness.

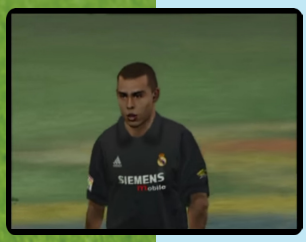
J N P

FIFA Soccer 2003

8.8



Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (us) EA Sports
Release date	(eu) October 25, 2002
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players



J N P

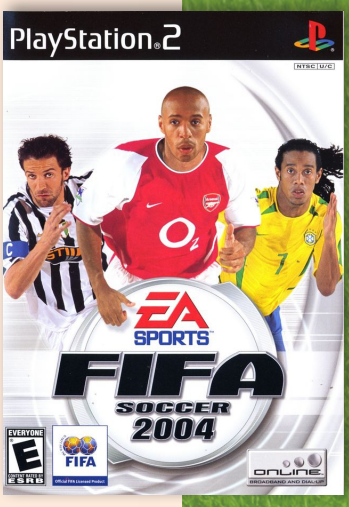
FIFA Football 2003 added features completely new gameplay from the previous titles. EA revamped the outdated DirectX 7 graphics used in FIFA 2001 and 2002, and introduced new graphics featuring more detailed stadia, players, and kits. Club Championship Mode was introduced with the feature of playing against 17 of Europe's top clubs in their own stadia and the fans singing their unique chants and songs. A TV-style broadcast package gave highlights at half-time and full-time, as well as comprehensive analysis. One of the most anticipated new features was EA Sport's "Freestyle Control" which allows the user to flick the ball on and lay it off to teammates. Other additions include greater likenesses of players such as Thierry Henry and Ronaldinho, as well as realistic player responses. FIFA Football 2003 was also the first game in the series to use the exclusive music menu system, EA Trax.

FIFA Soccer 2004

8.4

J N P

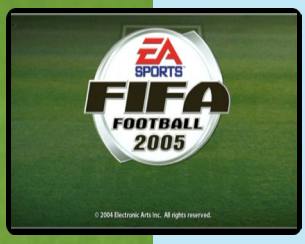
Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (us) EA Sports
Release date	(eu) October 24, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players



While not adding much to the game engine, the biggest new inclusion in FIFA Football 2004 is secondary divisions, which allow the player to take lower ranked teams into the top leagues and competitions (a promotion/relegation system was present since the 2000 edition, but none up until this one featured second-tier leagues). A new gameplay feature dubbed "off the ball" was introduced, which is the ability to simultaneously control two players, in order, for example, to move a second player into the box in anticipation of a pass. The online mode was touted as the main feature. Another key feature is "Football Fusion", which allows owners of both FIFA 2004 and Total Club Manager 2004 to play games from TCM in FIFA 2004. This is also the first FIFA game to feature Latin American club teams.

FIFA Soccer 2005

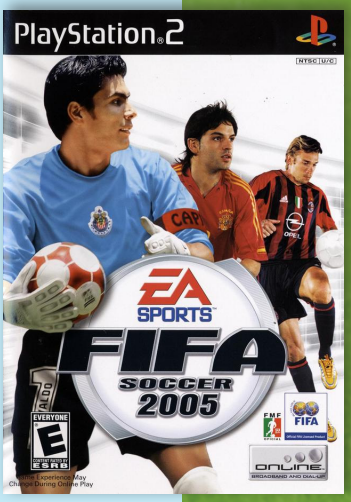
8.1



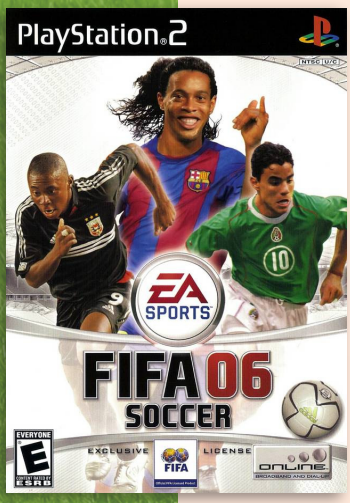
N P

Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (us) EA Sports
Release date	(eu) October 8, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

FIFA Football 2005 was released much earlier than the usual late October date to obtain a head start over Pro Evolution Soccer 4 and avoid clashing with EA Sports' own FIFA Street. The game features the return of the create-a-player mode, as well as an improved Career mode. The biggest difference compared to previous titles in the series is the inclusion of first-touch gameplay which provides gamers with the ability to perform "real-life" tricks and passes. It is also the first version to feature the full Mexican League. The game has no opening video, but its soundtrack is headlined by British DJ Paul Oakenfold, who composed the FIFA Theme especially for the game, using some sounds from the game such as crowd noises and commentary. This was also the last title released for the original PlayStation in the US.



FIFA Soccer 06



Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(eu) September 30, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

8.0

N P

FIFA's developers made a complete overhaul of the game engine for this installment of FIFA, claiming a dramatic increase in the control of play, having rewritten more than half the game's code. In addition to a renovation of the engine, which discards the "off the ball" system, the developers boasted a significantly more involved Career mode and the introduction of "team chemistry" which determines how well team members play together.

One of the new features in FIFA 06 was a special "retro" which features nostalgia of the game. Inside it includes an unlockable classic biographies section, a memorable moments video compilation, a video compilation with a retrospective view of every game in the FIFA series and the chance to play the first ever game in the FIFA series which was titled as "FIFA 94".

FIFA Soccer 07

8.2

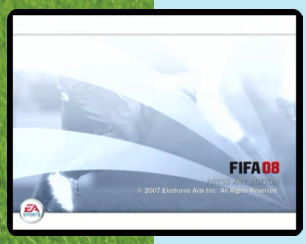
Developer	Team Fusion
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(au) September 25, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

The main differences from the previous game are a new "Interactive Leagues" function, new stadia such as the new Wembley Stadium and Emirates Stadium, and the ability to create custom teams and Turkcell Super League returns after seven years of absence from the series. There are a total of 27 leagues available. There is also an International league that features national football teams, and a Rest of World league that includes other notable clubs from around the world. The game's front-end and graphics engine remain largely the same.

It was the last game in the FIFA series to be released for the GameCube, Xbox, and Game Boy Advance, and the second to be released for the Xbox 360. The Xbox 360 version uses a completely new game engine which was created from scratch for the system.

FIFA Soccer 08

8.3



Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(au) September 27, 2007
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

FIFA 08 introduced a new game mode called "Be a Pro", in which the player controls only a single player on the field. This version also introduced a larger club section including the League of Ireland, and the Hyundai A-League of Australia, for the first time. Unlike FIFA 06 and 07 however, FIFA 08 does not include any memorable moments or season highlights.

Two new features were added. The first being goalkeeper AI, which meant when in a one-on-one situation with a forward and goalkeeper, one could push the right analog stick and have complete control of the goalkeeper. The second of these was when taking a free kick players were able to push the R3 to lock the position of the ball, while they used the stick to determine exactly where they wanted the free kick to go.

FIFA Soccer 09

8.2

N P

Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(au) October 2, 2008
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

Among the improvements in FIFA 09 are improved responsiveness that allows for quicker release of the ball, greater urgency in off-the-ball running, a new jostle system that takes into account the strength of the players when going shoulder-to-shoulder, and subtle animations that enable players to take first-time shots.

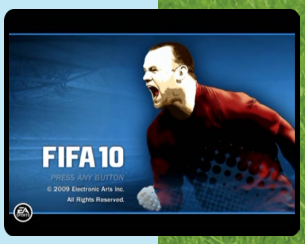
Another of the edition's biggest changes is a completely revamped collision system, which calculates speed, weight, and power when the players collide, as each player will have their own individual strength and power statistics depending on their body characteristics.

New goalkeeper technology has also been added which allows for better positioning, better reactions to saves, and faster recovery after a save has been made.

FIFA Soccer 10

Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(au) October 1, 2009
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

6.4



J N P

FIFA 10 has an extended Manager Mode which includes a new Assistant Manager that can be used to take care of the team's line-up and to rotate the squad based on importance of the upcoming match and improved finances. The "Player Experience and Growth System" has changed. Player growth will now be determined by in-game performance, demands placed on the player, and achievements based on the player's particular position. The games also features 50 stadia and 31 leagues, among which the Russian Premier League is introduced to the series. It also includes 360 degrees player control instead of the 8-direction control in previous games.

FIFA 10 is the second version of the game to sponsor a football club. Along with football magazine FourFourTwo, FIFA 10 is the co-sponsor of English League One club Swindon Town.

FIFA Soccer 11

7.5

Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (au) EA Sports
Release date	(us) September 28, 2010
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

FIFA 11 features a new replacement to Manager Mode called Career Mode, where the player can choose to be a player, manager, or player-manager for over 15 seasons. Many improvements have been made to Career Mode, one being that when signing new players, the user will have to agree to a transfer fee with the club, as well as other personal demands from the player; the club could also agree a fee with two teams for a player.

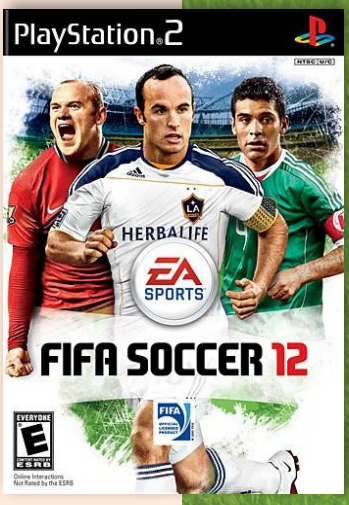
Goalkeepers now have more urgency and better perception of where to intercept loose balls, resulting in a more responsive and powerful rushing system. Goalkeepers are now more agile and can make more impressive saves. New animation warping technology provides game-realistic goalkeeper positioning and momentum, resulting in more varied scoring opportunities.

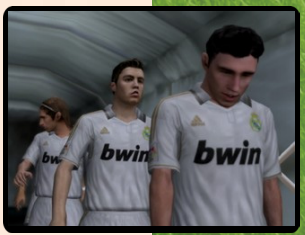
As of October 2011, 16 million copies of the game have been sold across all platforms.

FIFA Soccer 12

7.4

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) September 27, 2011
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players





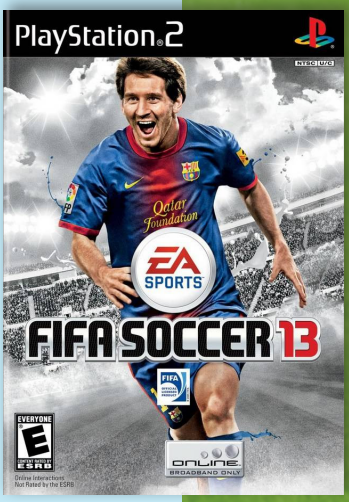
FIFA 12 is the first edition of the series to feature Arabic commentary. The Czech First League and Turkish Süper Lig are removed from the game (though Turkish side Galatasaray is still featured) and a third Argentine team, Racing Club de Avellaneda, is added to the Rest of World bracket. The Xbox 360 and the PlayStation 3 were the main consoles for the game, and for the first time, the PC version was feature-identical.

New features include; Player Impact Engine – a physics engine built to deliver real-world physicality in every interaction on the pitch. Precision Dribbling – delivers a higher fidelity of touch on the ball for attacking players. Tactical Defending – places equal importance on positioning, intercepting passes and tackling. And Pro Player Intelligence (only for CPU players).

FIFA Soccer 13

7.3

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(us) September 25, 2012
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players



FIFA 13 is the 2012 edition of Electronic Arts' association football FIFA video game series.

All leagues from FIFA 12 are included, with the addition of the Saudi Professional League for the first time in the series history. There are 46 international teams. The Czech Republic and Paraguay are returning. India, Bolivia and Venezuela return to the main series after an 11-year hiatus since FIFA Football 2002. Croatia was removed from the international teams, as they could not reach the licensing agreement. Career mode this year has been updated, with players being able to manage an international team as well as a club.

The game is the only FIFA title released for the Wii U, due to EA's decision to stop supporting the console in May 2013.

FIFA 14

Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(eu) September 27, 2013
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

7.3

FIFA 14 was the first FIFA game on the PlayStation 4 and the last Playstation 2 game to be released in North America.

The game features 33 fully licensed leagues, comprising over 600 clubs with over 16,000 players, as well as 47 fully licensed international teams and a legends team.

FIFA Ultimate team (FUT), which was introduced in FIFA 10 returns in FIFA 14. The game mode allows players to build their own team from real world players and staff, which they can then use to compete in both online and offline tournaments and divisions.

The game contains over 69 stadiums, including thirty-two real-world venues. New additions to FIFA 14 include La Bombonera (home of Boca Juniors), Goodison Park (home of Everton), and the Donbass Arena (home of Shaktar Donetsk).

FIFA World Cup: Germany 2006

7.7

Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) April 24, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

2006 FIFA World Cup is the official game for the 2006 FIFA World Cup. There are ten region-specific covers that feature a major player from each region.

The game allows players to participate in the 2006 FIFA World Cup held in Germany by taking control of one of 127 national teams. Since the release of the game 2002 FIFA World Cup, the menus have been redesigned and have more options. It even includes a satellite map when choosing countries to play in a Friendly. Online support is provided for ranked and unranked matches. The online service provides lobbies, leaderboards and a global challenge mode where the player can play through over forty historical World Cup scenarios, and even change the history.

J N P

FIFA Soccer World Championship

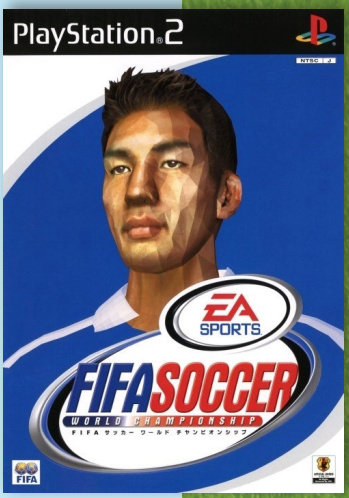
6.6

J

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts Victor
Release date	(jp) May 25, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

FIFA Soccer World Championship was developed by EA Canada and published by Electronic Arts.

Developed exclusively for the Japanese market, FIFA Soccer World Championship was the first EA Sports title released for the PlayStation 2. The game feature five different gameplay modes, including; Exhibition, World Cup, U-23 World Championship, League, and Training. World Soccer Championship feature new AI routines, fully rendered characters, redone animations, improved motion blending, 47 complete national teams, and a higher framerate. The in-game music is performed by the English band Jamiroquai and European DJ Pail Oakenfold, while new motion-capture data provided by Japanese soccer legend Hidetoshi Nakata has been included as well.



FIFA Street

5.9

Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	EA Sports Big
Release date	(eu) March 11, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

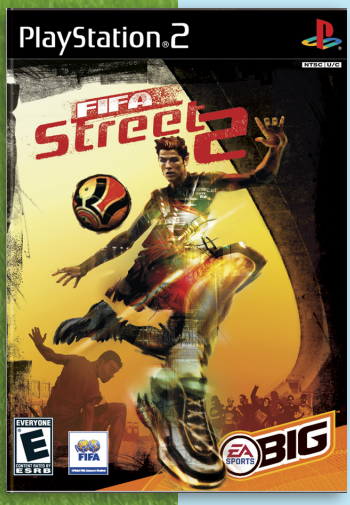
FIFA Street is a spin-off of EA's FIFA series, following the same formula as their other "Street" titles, NFL Street and NBA Street, by reducing the more complete version of the game into a simpler arcade style game. It focuses on flair, style and trickery, as opposed to what FIFA Football focuses on team play and tactics, reflecting the culture of freestyle football played in the streets and backlots across the world.

Using reputation and respect gained from playing 4-on-4 games with tricks and flair, the aim of FIFA Street is to build a team up of well-known and recognised players including Ronaldo and Ronaldinho to progress through street venues across the world.

The game received "mixed" reviews according to Metacritic.

J N P

FIFA Street 2



Developer	EA Canada
Publisher	EA Sports Big
Release date	(us) February 28, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

5.9

FIFA Street 2 is a street soccer game in which the player can take control of 4-a-side versions of national football teams in matches where the object is to win by scoring a set number of goals or points via tricks, or within a time limit. In the career mode "Rule the Streets", one creates a player and competes in tournaments around the world to obtain "Skill Bills" to buy clothing and upgrade his rating. As the player improves, he can captain his own street football team and eventually become an international. The best players have special moves often named after their nickname.

Soccer legends such as Zico, Carlos Alberto Torres and Abedi Pele are unlockable during the game.

The game has its own in-game radio station, presented by Zane Lowe formerly of BBC Radio 1 and featuring music by artists such as Roots Manuva, Sway, Pendulum, Editors and The Subways.

J N P

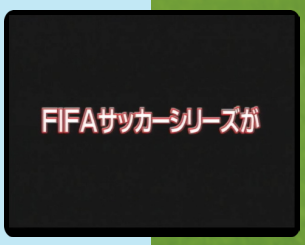
FIFA Total Football

7.0

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(jp) March 18, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

FIFA Total Football was only released in Japan on the PlayStation 2. Tt was based on FIFA 2004. The game feature 17 countries around the world, mainly the six major leagues of Europe, 400 club teams and more than 10,000 players.

The game also feature a franchise mode for exchanging sponsorship contracts and handling player acquisition.



J

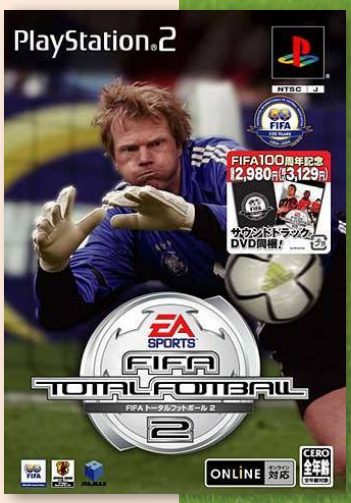
FIFA Total Football 2

J

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(jp) December 9, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

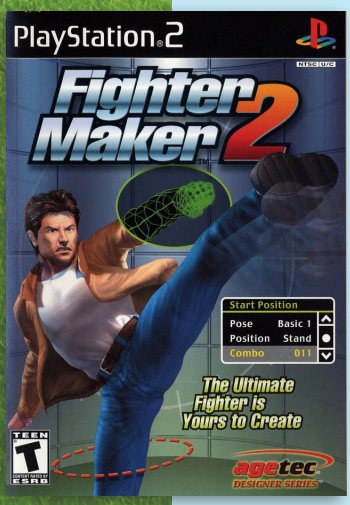
The FIFA Total Football series can sometimes be seen as a hybrid with gameplay composed of FIFA and PES game. The game feature a “franchise mode” where players take the role as a director, and manage their team. The game also featured an online battle mode.

The game was also released as a FIFA 100th Anniversary edition with a bonus DVD and sold at a lower price point.



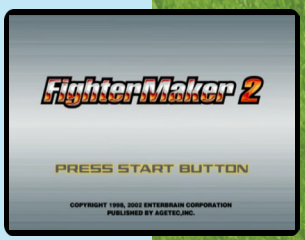
Fighter Maker 2

5.8



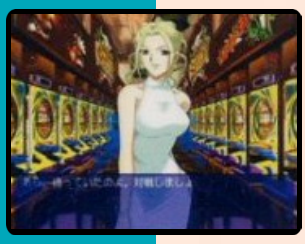
Developer	Enterbrain
Publisher	Enterbrain, (us) Agetec
Release date	(jp) August 29, 2002
Genre	Fighting, Miscellanious
Mode	1-2 Players

Fighter Maker 2 features a robust character creation system, letting players create animations and characters. The second game is similar to the original, but with more advancements in character design, movement, and attacks. As with the first, the game was met with lukewarm reviews, mainly due to its cumbersome interface and the lack of bells and whistles that were featured in most fighting games at the time.



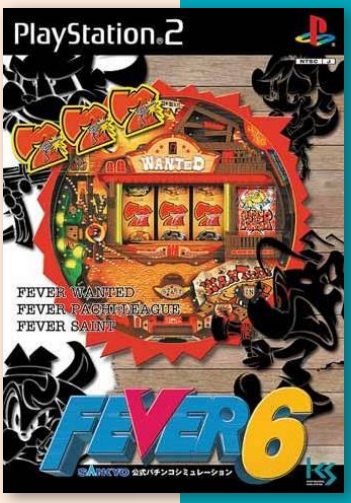
J N

Fever 6



Developer	ICS
Publisher	ICS
Release date	(jp) November 7, 2002
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

Fever 6 is part of the pachinko series of video games. This title include the pachinko machines; “F. Pachi League” “F. Saint” “F. Wanted” recorded. It consists of two types of “Capture mode” such as “Reach study” and ranking mode in which players compete with individual characters.



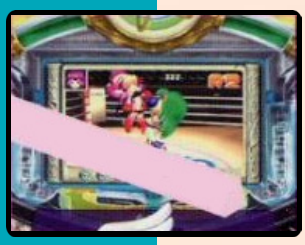
Fever 7

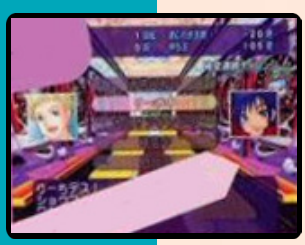
Developer	Opera House
Publisher	ICS
Release date	(jp) March 20, 2003
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The seventh title in the pachinko simulation series includes 6 different models of “Fever large lami Yamato” and “fever lucky bell”. The game mode is roughly divided into “capture mode” and “ranking mode”.

In “Capture mode”, players can retrieve various data such as outbound data, income and expenditure data, rotation data, reach data, big hit data and the like.

Fever 8





Developer	Opera House
Publisher	ICS
Release date	(jp) August 28, 2003
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The eighth pachinko “FEVER” game include only on machine. The game feature the same gameplay mechanics and game modes as in the previous titles.

“Capture mode” mode is the same as well as “ranking mode”, where players can compete against other characters with three fever special rules.

Fever 9

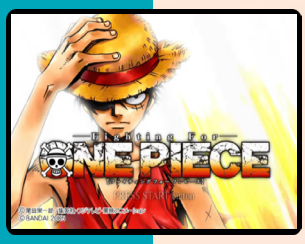
Developer	Opera House
Publisher	ICS
Release date	(jp) December 25, 2003
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

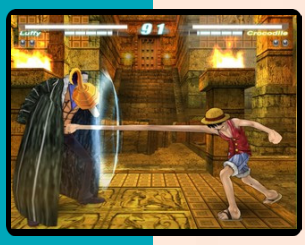
"FEVER" No. 9 include the pachinko machine "CR Fever Friends" which motifs cute dogs. The game feature the "Capture Mode". A new addition to this game is that a new rule is added to the ranking mode. It is possible to play against other characters with a total of 4 special rules.

J

5.4

Fighting for One Piece





J

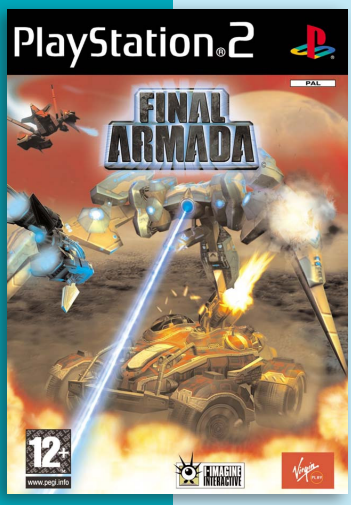
Developer	Flat-Out
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) September 8, 2005
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

The game is a 1 one 1 fighting game based on the Japanese anime series "One Piece". The game includes thirteen characters from the manga series, such as Franky and Aokiji from the Water Seven Saga.

Game modes include; Fighting Mode, Gamble Mode, VS Fight Mode, Training Mode and Recording Mode.

Final Armada

5.6



Developer	I-Imagine
Publisher	Virgin Play
Release date	(eu) August 17, 2007
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

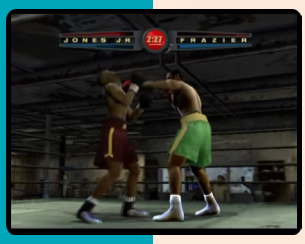
Final Armada is a mission-based vehicle combat game. Players battle in a war for a newly-discovered and immensely powerful crystal energy resource.

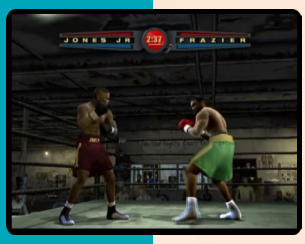
In the single-player Story Mode, players take on the role of Lieutenant Zake Andersen as he battles to regain control of Taro-469 after a devastating alien assault. The story mode contains 20 levels filled with a variety of mission objectives.

P

Fight Night 2004

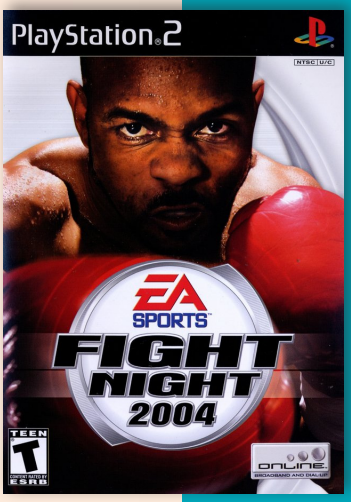
8.5





J N P

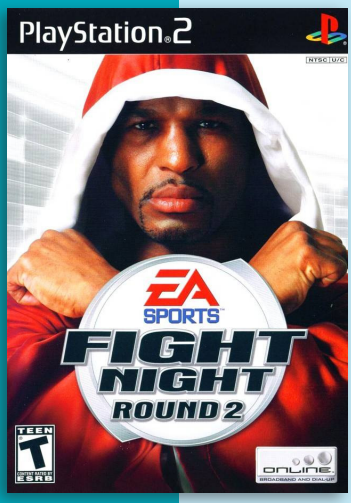
Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(us) April 5, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players



Fight Night 2004 is the successor to EA's previous boxing series, Knockout Kings. Its chief features are a career mode, in-depth and reasonably realistic fighting and an analog stick-based control scheme dubbed Total Punch Control, which was re-used, with enhancements, in the sequels.

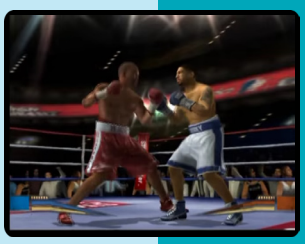
With Total Punch Control, most maneuvers, including punching, leaning and blocking, are performed with the left or right analog sticks, modified by the left or right triggers. For example, with the default controller configuration, moving the right analog stick up and to the left will cause the fighter to throw a straight punch with his left hand, while holding down the right trigger while performing the same movement and then holding R1 will cause the fighter to raise his guard to the left side of his head, ready to attempt a parry.

Fight Night Round 2



Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(us) February 28, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

8.8



J N P

Fight Night Round 2 expands upon the Total Punch Control scheme with the addition of another feature, the EA Sports Haymaker. An EA Sports Haymaker is a more powerful version of one of the basic power punches (hooks and uppercuts) and is performed by pulling the analog stick back before performing the movements for a regular punch. If it connects, a Haymaker causes quite a bit of damage, can stagger the victim and may cause an instant knockdown, regardless of the victim's health or stamina status. If blocked, the Haymaker does very little to no damage while consuming a great deal of stamina from the attacking boxer. If parried, the attacker is pushed off-balance and is left vulnerable to a Haymaker or combination attack.

The GameCube version contains the SNES classic Super Punch-Out!! as a bonus game.

Fight Night Round 3

8.4

Developer	EA Chicago
Publisher	EA Sports
Release date	(us) February 20, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

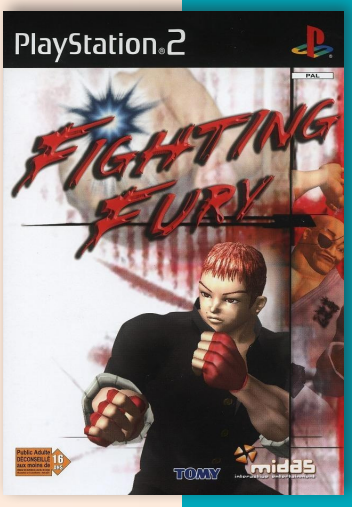
Fight Night Round 3 features the usual improvements such as better graphics and gameplay. “Impact Punches” are one of the most drastic changes, along with ESPN Classic fights and a new career mode, in which the player fights to gain popularity in order to reach sponsored fights, or to be featured on ESPN. Unlike in older versions, Round 3 defaults without a HUD, allowing a player to judge the status of their stamina and energy based on their stance, movements, and facial features, instead of the usual stamina meter. The roster consist of 27 licensed fighters, Fight Night Round 3 allows open weight bouts. This means everyone on the roster can fight one another in exhibitions. The official roster allows recreations of such fights as James Toney vs. Roy Jones Jr.

The game was criticized for its highly intrusive product placement, such as Everlast, Dodge and Burger King.

N P

Fighting Fury

6.0



Developer	Tomy Corporation
Publisher	Tomy Corporation, (eu) Midas Interactive
Release date	(jp) October 12, 2000
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Fighting Fury is a one on one fighting game, based on the Grappler Baki anime and manga by Keisuke Itagaki. The ‘Fighting Fury’ tournament is a place where the best fighters from different combat techniques come together to battle for victory. There are 13 characters to choose from, and each is skilled in a different fighting style (Karate, Wrestling, Kenpo, Street Fighting etc). Players are able to create their own moves lists by learning moves from the other fighters, and then editing them together to customize their character. The game also features an ‘Endorphin Gauge’, which will unlock super powerful moves.

Game modes include; Arcade, Versus, Edit Tournament, Edit moves-mode, Training, and Edit Baki.

J P

Final Approach

6.6

J

Developer	Princess Soft
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) October 7, 2004
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Final Approach is a romantic comedy visual novel following the story of Ryo Mizuhara who finds himself an unwilling participant in a secret government operation to oppose the declining of birthrates in Japan. Ryo ends up paired with a young girl, Shizuka, who in turn gets presented as his new fiancée. Despite his protests, the bodyguards that came in with Shizuka doesn't give Ryo much of a chance to throw her out.

Final Approach 2: 1st Priority

7.0

Developer	Princess Soft
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) February 28, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Players take the role of an average high school student who, one lonely Valentine's Day, meets a girl called Shizuka Masuda. He suddenly find himself involved with a number of girls, including Shizuka, his childhood friend, his classmate, a girl from his part time job and even his little sister. The aim of the game is to get a true Valentine's Day chocolate from one of these girls next year.

J

Finalist

8.0

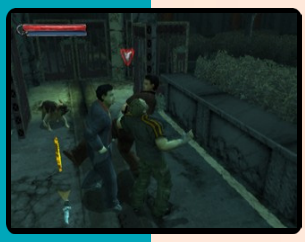
J

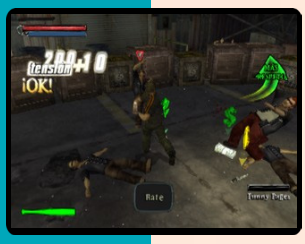
Developer	Princess Soft
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) January 26, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Finalist is romance comedy visual novel written by the scenario writer of the Final Approach game. The story takes place in a high-school campus, where the protagonist, Yoshiki Shirasagi, has been assigned a room in the women's dormitory, being mistaken for a girl due to his name. Players take the role of Yoshiki, a first year high-school student, in a typical love simulation visual novel game.

Final Fight: Streetwise

4.3





Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	(us) February 28, 2006
Genre	Beat-'em-up
Mode	1-2 Players

Final Fight: Streetwise is the sixth and final installment of the Final Fight series.

Streetwise is set several years after Final Fight 3, and focuses on Kyle Travers, Cody's younger brother. In Streetwise, Kyle roams the streets of his hometown, doing detective work, on the search for his captured brother. Kyle will run into familiar faces, as well as new ones.

Final Fight: Streetwise is a 3D beat 'em up game. The story mode, which is exclusively single player, has ten minigames, including cockroach stomping, arm-wrestling, slide puzzles, shooting contests and the classic car bash. Players earn money through pit fights and side missions, upgrading Kyle's moveset by training in various gyms in Metro City while progressing through the game. An 'instinct' system allows you to counter opponents' attacks, as well as make your attacks more powerful.

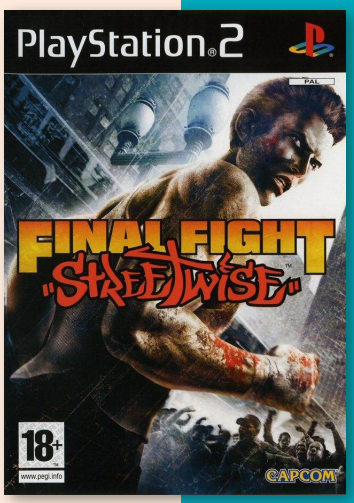
The arcade mode is a no-frills 3D brawler for 1 or 2 players. It does not have upgradable movesets, counters or instinct abilities. Kyle, Cody, Guy and Haggar are all playable characters in arcade mode. However, the game is over when the life bar is empty.

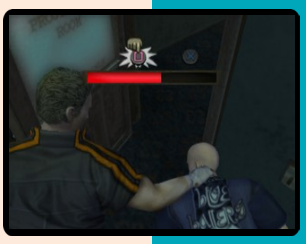
The game's save system can only be used once the player decides to quit the game. Progress will resume at the last checkpoint rather than the character's last position.

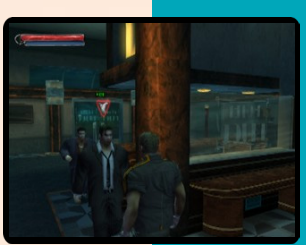
Before Streetwise entered development, Capcom Studio 8 worked on a separate game for the PlayStation 2, titled Final Fight: Seven Sons, which had different characters, a different gameplay system, a simulated "railcam" and cel-shaded graphics, the latter two of which served to mimic the aesthetics of Final Fight and its SNES sequels.

A promotional comic that contained concept art, illustrated by artist and lead voice actor Trent Kaniuga, was included with preorders of the game.

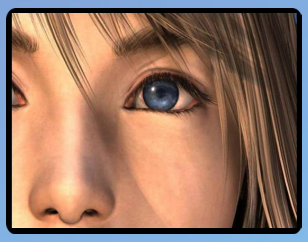
Upon release, the game received largely negative reviews worldwide, with an average score of 47% at GameRankings, and failed to achieve mainstream success.

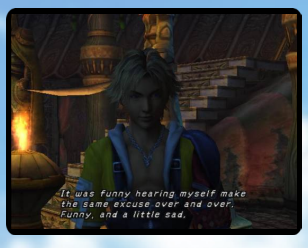






Final Fantasy X





Developer	SquareSoft
Publisher	Square Enix, SquareSoft, (us) Square EA
Release date	(jp) December 17, 2001
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

9.2

J N

Final Fantasy X is the tenth entry in the Final Fantasy series. Originally released in 2001 for Sony's PlayStation 2, the game was re-released as Final Fantasy X/X-2 HD Remaster for PlayStation 3 and PlayStation Vita in 2013, for PlayStation 4 in 2015 and for Windows in 2016. The game marks the Final Fantasy series transition from entirely pre-rendered backdrops to fully three-dimensional areas, and is also the first in the series to feature voice acting. Final Fantasy X replaces the Active Time Battle (ATB) system with the "Conditional Turn-Based Battle" (CTB) system, and uses a new leveling system called the "Sphere Grid".

Set in the fantasy world of Spira, a setting influenced by the South Pacific, Thailand and Japan, the game's story revolves around a group of adventurers and their quest to defeat a rampaging monster known as Sin. The player character is Tidus, a star athlete in the fictional sport of blitzball, who finds himself in the world Spira after his home city of Zanarkand is destroyed by Sin. Shortly after arriving to Spira, Tidus joins the summoner Yuna on her pilgrimage to destroy Sin.

Like previous games in the series, Final Fantasy X is presented in a third-person perspective, with players directly navigating the main character, Tidus, around the world to interact with objects and people. Unlike previous games, however, the world and town maps have been fully integrated, with terrain outside of cities rendered to scale. As Tidus explores the world, he randomly encounters enemies. When an enemy is encountered, the environment switches to a turn-based battle area where characters and enemies await their turn to attack.

The gameplay of Final Fantasy X differs from that of previous Final Fantasy games in its lack of a top-down perspective world map. Earlier games featured a miniature representation of the expansive areas between towns and other distinct locations, used for long-distance traveling. In Final Fantasy X, almost all the locations are essentially continuous and never fade out to a world map. Regional connections are mostly linear, forming a single path through the game's

locations, though an airship becomes available late in the game, giving the player the ability to navigate Spira faster. Like previous games in the series, Final Fantasy X features numerous minigames, most notably the fictional underwater sport "blitzball".

Final Fantasy X introduces the Conditional Turn-Based Battle system in place of the series' traditional Active Time Battle system first used in Final Fantasy IV. Whereas the ATB concept features real-time elements, the CTB system is a turn-based format that pauses the battle during each of the player's turns. Thus, the CTB design allows the player to select an action without time pressure. A graphical timeline along the upper-right side of the screen details who will be receiving turns next, and how various actions taken will affect the subsequent order of turns. The ordering of turns can be affected by a number of spells, items, and abilities that inflict status effects upon the controlled characters or the enemies. The player can control up to three characters in battle, though a swapping system allows the player to replace them with a character outside the active party at any time. "Limit Breaks", highly damaging special attacks, reappear in Final Fantasy X as "Overdrives". In this new incarnation of the feature, most of the techniques are interactive, requiring button inputs to increase their effectiveness. While initially the Overdrives can be used when the character receives a significant amount of damage, the player is able to modify the requirements to unlock them.

Final Fantasy X introduces an overhaul of the summoning system employed in previous games of the series. Whereas in previous titles a summoned creature would arrive, perform one action, and then depart, the "Aeons" of Final Fantasy X arrive and entirely replace the battle party, fighting in their place until either the aeon wins the battle, is defeated itself, or is dismissed by the player. Aeons have their own statistics, commands, special attacks, spells, and Overdrives. The player acquires five aeons over the course of the game through the completion of Cloister of Trials puzzles, but three additional aeons can be obtained by completing various side-quests.

As with previous titles in the series, players have the opportunity to develop and improve their characters by defeating enemies and acquiring items, though the traditional experience point system is replaced by a new system called the "Sphere Grid". Instead of characters gaining pre-determined statistic bonuses for their attributes after leveling up, each character gains "Sphere Levels" after collecting enough Ability Points (AP). Sphere Levels allow players to move around the Sphere Grid, a pre-determined grid of interconnected nodes consisting of various statistic and ability bonuses. "Spheres" are applied to these nodes, unlocking its function for the selected character.

The Sphere Grid system also allows players to fully customize characters in contrast to their intended battle roles, such as turning the White Mage-roled Yuna into a physical powerhouse and the swordsman Auron into a healer. The International and PAL versions of the game include an optional "Expert" version of the Sphere Grid; in these versions, all of the characters start in the middle of the grid and may follow whichever path the player chooses. As a trade-off, the Expert grid has fewer nodes in total, thus decreasing the total statistic upgrades available during the game.

Blitzball is a minigame that requires strategy and tactics. The underwater sport is played in a large, hovering sphere of water surrounded by a larger audience of onlookers. The player controls one character at a time as they swim through the sphere performing passes, tackles, and attempts to score. The gameplay is

similar to that of the main game in the way that the controlled character moves through the area until they encounter an enemy. In this case, the enemy is a member of the opposing team. Status effects are also implemented in the minigame as each player can learn techniques that are equivalent to abilities in the main game.

Blitzball is first introduced in the beginning of the game during one of the early cinematic sequences in which Tidus, the main character who is described as a star blitzball player, is part of an intense game. It is the only minigame that plays a role in the overall plot line as it is not only a main part of Tidus's character, but it's also in the first scene where the game's main antagonist, Sin is shown. Unlike with the other minigames, playing blitzball is mandatory near the beginning of the game, but it is later optional.

A chocobo training and racing game can be played in the Calm Lands. The player participates in several challenges to train a chocobo and then uses those skills to race another chocobo at Remiem Temple.

When fiends from all over Spira are captured using special weapons, they appear in the Monster Arena and can be fought at any time (for a fee). Certain combinations are bred into tougher enemies and superbosses. The spoils earned at the arena are key to maxing out the Sphere Grid.

Final Fantasy X's development began in 1999, costing approximately ¥4 billion (approximately $47.4 million in 2017 dollars) with a crew of over 100 people, most of whom worked on previous games in the series. Executive producer Hironobu Sakaguchi has stated that although he had concerns about the transition from 2D to 3D backgrounds, the voice acting, and the transition to real-time story-telling, the success of the Final Fantasy series can be attributed to constantly challenging the development team to try new things. Producer Yoshinori Kitase was also the chief director of Final Fantasy X, while the direction of events, maps and battles was split up between Motomu Toriyama, Takayoshi Nakazato and Toshiro Tsuchida, respectively. The development of the script for the game took three to four months, with the same amount of time dedicated to the voice recording afterwards. Kazushige No jima collaborated with Daisuke Watanabe, Toriyama and Kitase on writing the scenario for Final Fantasy X. Nojima was particularly concerned with establishing a connection in the relationship between player and main character. Thus, he penned the story such that the player's progress through the world and growing knowledge

about it is reflected in Tidus' own understanding and narration.

Character designer Tetsuya Nomura has identified the South Pacific, Thailand and Japan as major influences on the cultural and geographic design of Spira, particularly concerning the geographic location of the southern Besaid and Kilika islands. He has also said that Spira deviates from the worlds of past Final Fantasy games in the level of detail incorporated, something he has expressed to have made a conscious effort to maintain during the design process. Kitase felt that if the setting went back to a medieval European fantasy, it would not seem to help the development team advance. While he was thinking of different world environments, Nojima suggested a fantasy world that incorporated Asian elements. Sub-character chief designer Fumi Nakashima's focus was to ensure that characters from different regions and cultures bore distinctive characteristics in their clothing styles, so that they could be quickly and easily identified as members of their respective sub-groups. For example, she has said that the masks and goggles of the Al Bhed give the group a "strange and eccentric" appearance, while the attire of the Ronso lend to them being able to easily engage in battle. Tidus' relationship with his father Jecht was based *"stories throughout the ages, such as the ancient Greek legends."* This would eventually reveal the key of Sin's weakness and eventual defeat.

Final Fantasy X features innovations in the rendering of characters' facial expressions, achieved through motion capture and skeletal animation technology. This technology allowed animators to create realistic lip movements, which were then programmed to match the speech of the game's voice actors. Nojima has revealed that the inclusion of voice acting enabled him to express emotion more powerfully than before, and he was therefore able to keep the storyline simple. He also said that the presence of voice actors led him to make various changes to the script, in order to match the voice actors' personalities with the characters they were portraying. The inclusion of voice, however, led to difficulties. With the game's cutscenes already programmed around the Japanese voice work, the English localization team faced the difficulty of establishing English-oriented dialogue and the obstacle of incorporating this modified wording with the rhythm and timing of the characters' lip movements. Localization specialist Alexander O. Smith noted that they had to keep the localized sound file within the duration of the original Japanese, as longer files would cause the game to crash. He described the process of fitting nat-

ural-sounding English speech into the game as *"something akin to writing four or five movies' worth of dialogue entirely in haiku form [and] of course the actors had to act, and act well, within those restraints."*

The game was initially going to feature online elements, offered through Square's PlayOnline service. The features, however, were dropped during production, and online gaming would not become part of the Final Fantasy series until Final Fantasy XI. Map director Nakazato wanted to implement a world map concept with a more realistic approach than that of the traditional Final Fantasy game, in line with the realism of the game's 3D backgrounds, as opposed to pre-rendered backgrounds. As a player of the games in the Final Fantasy series, battle director Tsuchida wanted to recreate elements he found interesting or entertaining, which eventually led to the removal of the Active Time Battle system, and instead, incorporated the strategy-focused Conditional Turn-Based Battle system. Originally, Final Fantasy X was going to feature wandering enemies visible on the field map, seamless tran-

lar series composer Nobuo Uematsu has had any assistance in composing the score for a game in the main series. His fellow composers for Final Fantasy X were Masashi Hamauzu and Junya Nakano. They were chosen for the soundtrack based on their ability to create music that was different from Uematsu's style while still being able to work together. PlayOnline.com first revealed that the game's theme song was completed in November 2000. As Square still had not revealed who would sing the song, GameSpot personally asked Uematsu, who jokingly answered *"It's going to be Rod Stewart."*

The Japanese version of Final Fantasy X included an additional disc entitled "The Other Side of Final Fantasy", which featured interviews, storyboards, and trailers for Blue Wing Blitz, Kingdom Hearts, and Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within, as well as the first footage of Final Fantasy XI.

Square expected the game to sell at least two million copies worldwide owing to the reduced PlayStation 2's fanbase, making it smaller than the last three released titles. However, within four days of its release in Japan, the game had sold over 1.4 million copies in pre-orders, which set a record for the fastest-selling console RPG. These figures exceeded the performances of Final Fantasy VII and IX in a comparable period, and Final Fantasy X became the first PlayStation 2 game to reach two million and four million sold copies. In October 2007, the game was listed as the 8th best-selling game for the PlayStation 2. Final Fantasy X sold over 2.26 million copies in Japan alone in 2001, and sold 6.6 million copies worldwide by January 2004. By July 2006, it had sold 2.3 million copies and earned $95 million in the United States. Next Generation ranked it as the 11th highest-selling game launched for the PlayStation 2, Xbox or GameCube between January 2000 and July 2006 in that country. As of 2017, the PS2 version of the game has sold over 8 million copies worldwide.

The "Ultimate Hits" bargain reissue of the game in September 2005 sold over 131,000 copies in Japan by the end of 2006. In October 2013, Square Enix announced Final Fantasy X and its sequel Final Fantasy X-2 have together sold over 14 million copies worldwide on PlayStation 2.

Final Fantasy X received critical acclaim by the media. Famitsu and Famitsu PS2 awarded the game a near-perfect 39/40 score. Another Japanese gaming magazine, The Play Station, gave the game a score of 29/30. Famitsu, Famitsu PS2, and The Play Station expressed particularly favorable responses toward the game's storyline, graphics, and movies. The game maintains a 92 out of 100 on Metacritic. Producer Shinji Hashimoto stated that the overall reception to the game was "excellent", having received praise and awards from the media.

IGN's David Smith offered praise for the voice actors and the innovations in gameplay, particularly with the revised battle and summon systems, the option to change party members during battle, and the character development and inventory management systems. They also felt that the game's graphics had improved on its predecessors in every way possible, and that the game as a whole was *"the best-looking game of the series [and] arguably the best-playing as well"*.

Edge rated the game considerably lower, criticizing many aspects of the game for being tedious and uninnovative and describing the dialogue as *"nauseating"*, particularly panning Tidus. Andrew Reiner of Game Informer criticized the game's linearity and that players were no longer able to travel the world by chocobo or control the airship. Eurogamer's Tom Bramwell noted that the game's puzzle segments were *"depressing"* and *"superfluous"*, and that although the Sphere Grid was *"a nice touch"*, it took up too much of the game. The linearity of the game was positively commented on by GamePro who stated that a player would not be required to participate in side-quests or the mini-game to reach the game's conclusion, finding some of them unappealing. Game Revolution complained that cutscenes could not be skipped, some even being too long.

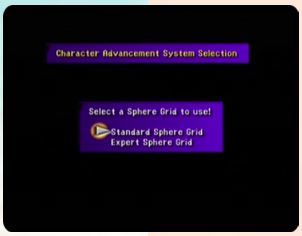
Final Fantasy X received the Best Game Award from the Japan Game Awards for 2001–2002. In GameSpot's "Best and Worst Awards" from 2001, it came seventh in the category "Top 10 Video Games of the Year". Readers of Famitsu magazine voted it the best game of all time in early 2006. Final Fantasy X came in fifth on IGN's "Top 25 PS2 Games of All Time" list in 2007 and sixth in "The Top 10 Best Looking PS2 Games of All Time". In a similar list by GameSpy, the game took the 21st place. 1UP.com listed its revelation during the ending as the third-biggest video game spoiler, while IGN ranked the ending as the fifth best pre-rendered cutscene. In a Reader's Choice made in 2006 by IGN, it ranked as the 60th-best video game. It was also named one of the 20 essential Japanese role-playing games by Gamasutra. In the poll in which Famitsu asked its readers what games made Japanese gamers cry, Final Fantasy X topped the chart as the number 1 game.

In May 2009 a preview-build of the North American version was leaked online. This build is from about two months before the final release. It has a debug mode at the main menu, and the FMVs are in Japanese with English subtitles.

Pressing Select during gameplay brings up debug info, and there are plenty of humorous scenes and settings that were never supposed to make it into the final game. The leaked version has grayed out loading options in the config: either "HDD" or "DVD-ROM". There is also an HDD option in the main menu.

Final Fantasy X International

9.2



Developer	SquareSoft
Publisher	Square Enix, (ko) Square Enix
Release date	(jp) January 31, 2002
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

The International Version was released in Japan on January 31, 2002, and later in Europe (the European release was simply titled Final Fantasy X). This updated version has different box art for Japan, and new features, such as an Expert Sphere Grid, which allows for accessing abilities more easily, but less overall stat-growth. New abilities were added to both Standard and Expert Grids.

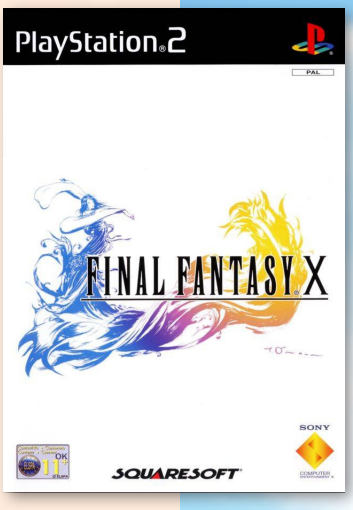
The Dark Aeons and Penance, all powerful superbosses, were added, as well as many minor changes to dialogue, scenes, the Celestial Weapons' key items (Japan only), characters and armor, weapon customizations, such as Ribbon. The release also includes a bonus disc with behind the scenes making-of features of Final Fantasy X, and a Final Fantasy X: Eternal Calm, a special movie prologue to Final Fantasy X-2.

The European release has the the Dark Aeons and Penance, as well as the new equipment abilities, but didn't change the name of the Celestial Sigils and Crests. As with previous PAL conversions of Final Fantasy installments, the game has black borders and a slower running-speed as a result of poor PAL conversion. The black label version includes a bonus DVD with the title Beyond Final Fantasy.

Some versions of Final Fantasy X: International have a glitch, whereby if the player goes to the area where they fight Dark Ifrit it is possible to slip past the men blocking the way to Home, and thus, be able to return to the story at the events in Home with Yuna in the party. This glitch can be repeated after the first time it is used.

Square Enix re-released Final Fantasy X as a debut title for its "Ultimate Hits" range alongside Final Fantasy X-2 in Japan. They also released the Ultimate Hits editions of the two titles collectively in the Final Fantasy X/X-2 Ultimate Box along with Final Fantasy X: Eternal Calm.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

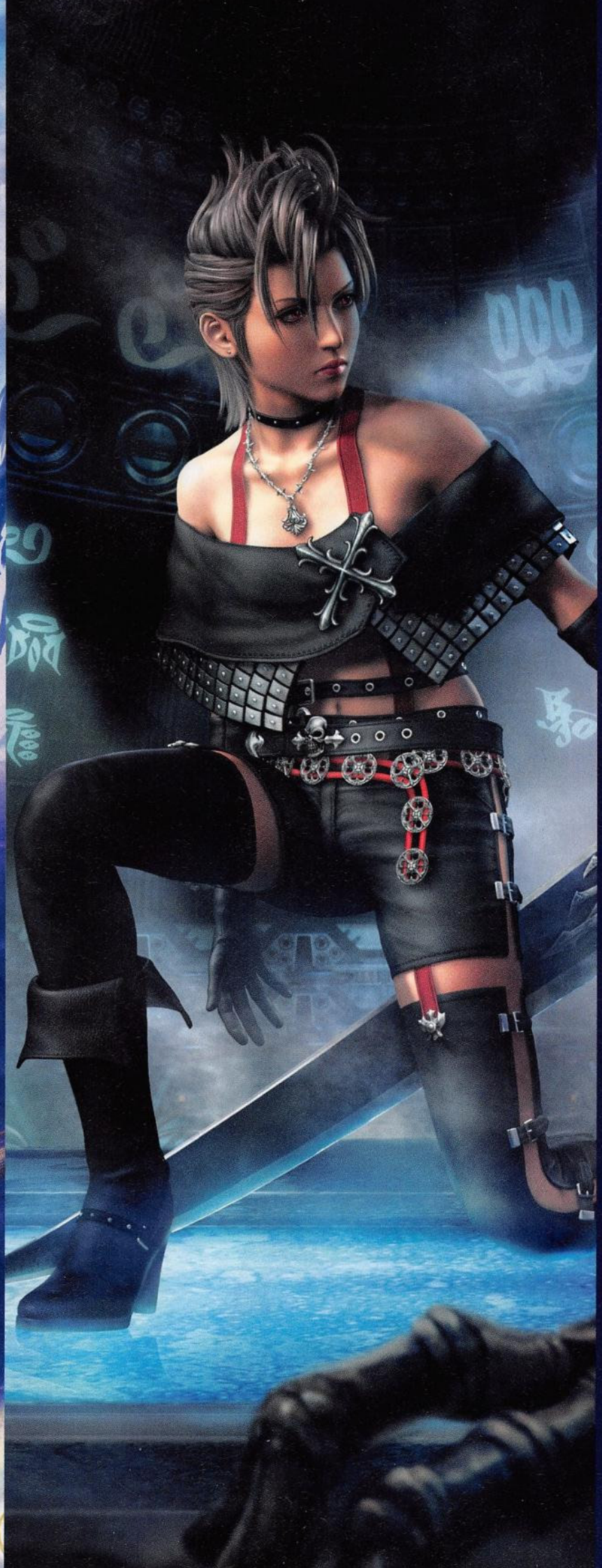


Korean BigHit Edition

J P

WHY SHOULD THE BAD GUYS HAVE ALL THE FUN?

©2000, 2004 SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. All rights reserved. MAIN CHARACTER DESIGN: TETSUYA NOMURA. ALTERNATE COSTUME DESIGN: TETSU TSUKAMOTO. FINAL FANTASY is a trademark of SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.



Untold dangers await you in this incredible journey around mystical lands. Join three tough ladies, Yuna, Rikku and Paine as they face the rising tide of evil in their fight for peace and the ultimate prize - the truth.

Enter the extraordinary universe of Final Fantasy X-2.

M15+

PlayStation 2 SQUARE ENIX

www.square-enix-europe.com
www.eagames.com.au

E6052b

FINAL FANTASY X-2

by: March Stepnik and Vanessa Morgan@PSW (AU) #17

A sequel-sequel to the series without sequels? PSW visited Square-Enix HQ in Tokyo to chat with the Final Fantasy X-2 team about the significant sequel and to set the record straight.

IT'S ALL A BIT TOPSY-TURVY, BUT SEE IF YOU CAN follow the logic. The game that was never final and which spawned nine 'sequels' is getting its first true sequel since its original release 17 years ago - but this sequel is to the tenth game in the series. And it's imaginatively called *Final Fantasy: Ten-Two*. Yep, no sub-title either. Just *X-2*.

Make sense?

To simplify it just a tad then; if you don't count those infernal chocobos and mogs (*Final Fantasy* fans will know what we're talking about here), then each of the ten games in the Final Fantasy RPG series have been stand-alone titles with no direct links or continuity from one to the each other, offering all new characters, locations and stories to experience. But the latest in the series breaks from this convention, with SquareEnix (formerly SquareSoft) having developed a linear follow-up to the smash *Final Fantasy X* released on the PS2 in 2002. Which means fans of the series - and of *FFX* in particular - will get the chance to re-visit characters and places featured in the previous *FF* title - a first that won't be lost in the faithful (SquareEnix long ago found the secret formula for *Final Fantasy* and has stuck with it ever since).

So is *FFX2* simply a case of SquareEnix milking the lucrative *Final Fantasy* cash-cow for all it's worth, tiding those fans that didn't or won't buy into *FFXI* (the online RPG take of the series which went live in Japan earlier in the year, and has just gone live in the US) until *Final Fantasy XII* - the next single-player instalment in the series - releases in late 2004?

It doesn't seem so. Not obviously, at least. "Freedom is the dominant theme of *Final Fantasy X-2*," offers Yoshinori Kitase, *FFX*'s and *FFX2*'s producer, and the man at the helm (or somewhere nearby) of all the main *Final Fantasy* games since *FFV*. And he's not just talking about the characters and plot of *FFX2* here either (just what does ex-heroes do once they've already saved the world from a great and impending evil?); he's also referring to the freedom his development team employed when creating *FFX2*. "When we were asked to do the sequel, we all knew that it was imperative that we did something different," continues Kitase. "We wanted a change; making another *Final Fantasy* in this context would have been tedious - for us as well as our audience."

But don't believe the hype. When *FFX2* was first announced, it seemed as though SquareEnix was about to turn the series onto its head, employing all manner of elements from other games in a desperate attempt to provide something new for the series. There was talk of the *Final Fantasy* series taking on Lara Croft at her own game with more action-oriented, platform jumping sections - full 3D gameworlds requiring fine acrobatics to negotiate. There was even discussion of side-scrolling gameplay elements to be included. Early screenshots showed an abundance of flesh of the female characters in the game, and it was revealed early that the stars of this sequel were to be the female characters from *FFX*.

The reality of the situation is somewhat more modest. Yes, *FFX2* is an experiment on SquareEnix's behalf an it's *Final Fantasy* like you've never seen it before - but it's not a huge departure from the staples of the series. This is still very much an epic *Fi-*

nal Fantasy adventure with plenty of familiar mechanics, but with a few significant twists: there are no male leads, it's more action-oriented, it's an *FF* that dares to have a bit more fun with itself (previous titles have been accused of being just a tad too sombre), and it's a *Final Fantasy* that's a lot less linear than the others in the series.

Set in Spira two years after the event of *FFX*, the land is experiencing a period of peace and prosperity known as the "Eternal Calm" after Yuna defeated the great evil known as Sin. Lacking in direction and more than a little broken-hearted from the loss of the object of her affection, Yuna is stirred into action after coming across a magical sphere - a recording device that archives images of past events - which reveals some of what happened to the male protagonist of *FFX*. With the support of the bubbly Rikku and new-comer Paine, Yuna becomes a sphere-hunter to piece together the mystery of Tidus' fate.

The obvious difference to other *FF*s is the casting of the main protagonists of this story: they're all female. "Since the clear majority of the staff involved in the making of *FFX2* were males in their mid-thirties, we always had the worry of whether we would be able to create a game focused around female characters," explains Kitase. "So we constantly asked the opposite sex for advice. They were very helpful," adds Kitase. "They often criticised certain aspects of the dress sphere system and the outfits - that they were too sexy. They also criticised many aspects of the scenarios - that girls don't think or act like that."

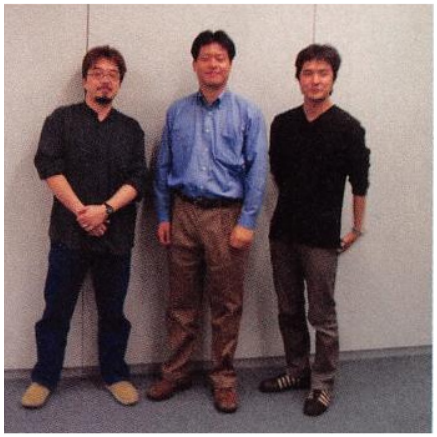
Apart from a focus on female characters, SquareEnix implemented the previously mentioned dress sphere system into the game - a modified version of the Grid Sphere system of character development used in *FFX*. It's remarkably simple: each outfit that characters collect during the game represents a new character class (character class interaction was abandoned after *Final Fantasy V*), offering different abilities and proficiencies in character stats. There are several classes for players to experiment with, ranging from Thief to Warrior, Alchemist to Trainer, each offering different abilities both on and off the battlefield. Players won't be locked into one character class for most of the game though: characters can change outfits mid-battle, replete with flashy animation sequences worthy of Aeon/GF summon sequences in previous games. The character's abilities will immediately reflect the outfit change, paving the way for more strategic battles in the game.

The battle system has also been given an overhaul. Gone is the slow and cumbersome Conditional Turn-Based (CTB) system of *FFX*, to be replaced with a modified version of the more familiar Active Time-Battle (ATB) system used in earlier games. With no automatic pauses for a player to choose their attacks. Coupled with an overall increase in the speed of battles, *FFX2*'s only real concern here is that it may be too fast - even for those experienced with the series. SquareEnix has also implemented other changes to the ATB system: action queue lengths are now dependant on the option selected by the player. Casting magic will take longer than using an item, while using a standard attack will fall somewhere in between. And attacks can now be chained, offering a more lethal offensive to more experimental players.

MISSION-BASED

The structure of *Final Fantasy* game is something of a bone of contention amongst fans. As absorbing as the story and scenarios of each adventure, there's really one way to play them - from start to finish, in one very linear line. Sure, there are moments when the game opens up and there's freedom for players to search for rare items or tie up loose ends, but it's a very fickle illusion indeed. "We got a lot of feedback from our audience, and the single biggest complaint about the *Final Fantasy* series is the single linear structure," admits Kitase. "Players wanted more freedom, so we took it onboard as a challenge for *FFX2*." The result is a mission-based *Final Fantasy* adventure. Divided into five chapters, the story critical missions are always clearly indicated. "If players were to play nothing but these missions, the game is clearly the shortest *Final Fantasy* we've created."

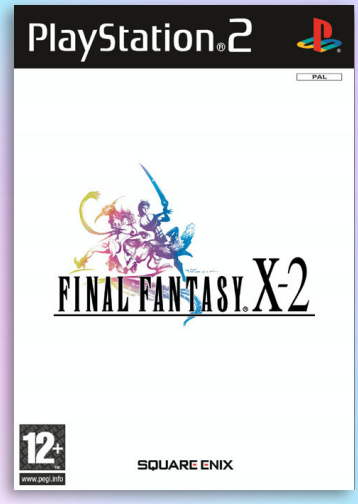
And if the detail of the early stages of the game is consistent throughout the adventure, then we'd take the more thorough approach over the condensed version any day. Sure, *Final Fantasy X-2* is an experimental title, a prototype if you will of the future of the series. But at its heart is a world rich with character and story.



Motomu Toriyama - Director, Yoshinori Kitase - Producer, Nojima Kazushige - Scenario Writer

8.5

Final Fantasy X-2



J N P

Developer	SquareSoft
Publisher	SquareSoft, Square Enix, (eu) Electronic Arts
Release date	(jp) March 13, 2003
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Final Fantasy X-2 is the direct sequel to Final Fantasy X. The game's story follows the character Yuna from Final Fantasy X as she seeks to resolve political conflicts in the world of Spira before it all leads to war and search for her lost love Tidus from Final Fantasy X.

Though a direct sequel to Final Fantasy X, Final Fantasy X-2 does not duplicate its predecessor's gameplay; instead, it innovates on traditional elements. Like pre-Final Fantasy X installments, characters "level up" after a certain number of battles, by gaining pre-determined stat bonuses. The conditional turn-based battle system in Final Fantasy X has been replaced by a faster-paced variation of the Final Fantasy series' traditional ATB system, which was originally designed by Hiroyuki Ito and first featured in Final Fantasy IV. Whenever a random enemy is encountered, the ATB system is used. Under this enhanced version of the ATB, playable characters may interrupt an enemy while they are preparing to take action, instead of waiting for an enemy's turn to finish before attacking. Furthermore, it is possible for both characters and enemies to chain attacks together for greater damage.

Another departure from the gameplay of Final Fantasy X is in its world navigation system: players can visit almost every location in Spira from early in the game, transported via the airship Celsius. This is a deviation from the overall Final Fantasy series, where the most efficient means of transportation is typically not obtained until late in the game.

These two changes allow players to choose a less linear storyline. Unlike Final Fantasy X, in which a player's course through the game's world was largely straightforward, Final Fantasy X-2 is almost entirely free form. The game consists of five chapters, with each location featuring one scenario per chapter. Put together, the five scenarios in one locale form a subplot of the game, called an "Episode". Only a few scenarios per chapter are integral to the game's central plot, and are marked on the world navigation system as "Hotspots" ("Active Links" in the Japanese ver-

sion). By accessing only Hotspots, a player can quickly proceed through the game's story without participating in sidequests.

The field-map navigation system is largely unchanged from Final Fantasy X; it is still dominantly three dimensional with mostly continuous locations. A few upgrades have been implemented, providing the player with extended interaction with the environment through jumping, climbing and rotating camera angles.

The game's sidequests include minor tasks and quests, optional bosses and dungeons, and the most minigames of any Final Fantasy at the time of its release. These minigames include Gunner's Gauntlet (a third-person/first-person shooter game) and Sphere Break (a mathematical coin game involving addition and multiplication), as well as blitzball, but with a different control scheme. Director Motomu Toriyama has explained that one of the concepts at issue during development was providing a large variety of minigames, such that *"if you bought Final Fantasy X-2 you wouldn't need any other game"*.

Final Fantasy X-2 reintroduces the series' classic character class system (seen previously in Final Fantasy III, Final Fantasy V and Final Fantasy Tactics) through the inclusion of dressspheres. Because the party never grows beyond three characters, switching characters during battle is unnecessary. Instead, the player can switch character classes, providing access to different abilities. The playable characters are allowed to equip one dressphere at a time, each providing different battle functions and abilities. Characters can learn new skills for each dressphere with the use of Ability Points (AP). AP is obtained by defeating enemies and by the use of items and abilities for that sphere. Abilities to be learned are chosen in the main menu. During battle, AP is given to that ability until it is learned. Each character can access as many as six dresspheres at a time, depending on the specific properties of the Garment Grid they are wearing. The Garment Grid is a placard featuring a geometric shape connected by nodes. These nodes are slots that can be filled with dresspheres, allowing characters to change character classes during their turn in battle. Most Garment Grids possess Gates that when passed through grant the user a complimentary buff.

Concept art of Yuna with an unused dressphere design.

Development of Final Fantasy X-2 began in late 2001 in response to the success of Final Fantasy X, particularly fan reaction to the Eternal Calm video included in the Japanese version of Final Fantasy X International. It was released in Japan shortly before the merger between Square and Enix. The game's eventual name, X-2, was initially not liked by the production team, but it was eventually accepted since the story was a direct continuation of X and thus could not be the next numbered title in the series. Kazushige Nojima, the previous game's writer, was also skeptical about the creation of a sequel. Something he was particularly averse to originally was the happy ending, which he felt was wrong for the story. The production team was one third the size of the previous installment. This was because the team was already familiar with the material and it allowed them to give a hand-crafted feel to the game. In designing the game, a significant number of character models, enemies, and location designs from Final Fantasy X were reused. Character designer Tetsuya Nomura has explained that this allowed the game to be developed in one year and at half the normal scope Final Fantasy titles are normally produced. Maya and Softimage 3D were the two main programs used to create the graphics.

Producer Yoshinori Kitase and director Motomu Toriyama have explained that the objective in mind when designing Final Fantasy X-2 was to embrace the concept of change as the game's theme and establish a more upbeat atmosphere than its predecessor. The reuse of the engine and locations from the original game meant that the team could spend most of their time focusing on the gameplay systems and plot. To portray the drastic change in Spira, the developers excluded summons, redesigned towns, and included vehicles. The low-flying vehicles were added to allow the player quicker access and mobility to the areas that were already available in the previous title.

The ending of Final Fantasy X meant that the Aeon summoning system from the game could not be used in the sequel, necessitating the team to make a new gameplay system. Because of the emphasis on a more optimistic setting, the game's dressphere system (inspired by the magical girl subgenre of anime and manga) was implemented, and the atmosphere of J-pop introduced right from the game's opening sequence. Additional allusions to popular culture in general were featured, such as the style of Charlie's Angels. The dressphere system, along with having a lead cast of three non-"macho" girls were intended to keep the tone of the game light and lively. Lulu was excluded from the lead cast because, in addition to being married, her presence would have given her an "older sister" role to Yuna, rather than letting Yuna take the lead on discovering herself on her own. Though work on the opening song and motion capture began early in development, the opening sequence was actually the last portion of the game to be completed.

Final Fantasy X-2 sold over 1.94 million copies in Japan in 2003 as the highest-selling game of the year. Within nine months of its Japanese release, it sold more than a million copies in North America (within two months of its release there), and nearly four million copies worldwide. It went on to sell 2.11 million units in Japan, 1.85 million units in the United States, and more than 100,000 units in the United Kingdom.

It was voted as the 32nd best game of all time by readers of the Japanese video game magazine Famitsu, which also gave it a 34 out of 40. The English release of Final Fantasy X-2 won the Seventh Annual Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences award in 2004 for "Outstanding Achievement in Character Performance" in recognition of the character Rikku.

Multimedia website IGN felt that the game's shift in tone is *"part of what makes [it] so intriguing,"* labeling the storyline *"a deep political drama"* that *"always manages to keep from taking things too seriously."* They also commented that the game *"treats its history with intelligence"* and *"its returning characters...just as clever"*. Further positive reaction came from RPGamer, with one staff reviewer summarizing X-2 as *"a light-hearted fun game"* that *"may ... be the most enjoyable thing to come from the series in several years"*, while another regarded its battle system as innovative and *"very simple to navigate"*.

The game's stylistic changes from past Final Fantasy titles sparked negative comments, with some perceiving it as a change in the spirit of the franchise. Among these were the game's status as Final Fantasy's first direct sequel and the change from a tragic atmosphere in Final Fantasy X to a dominantly lighthearted tone in Final Fantasy X-2. In their review, gaming website GameSpot commented that *"Some of the missions ... come off as downright silly and a bit tacked on"*. Additionally, they felt that the game's non-linear style makes it *"[lack] the singular narrative thrust of Final Fantasy X or other typical RPGs, and the storyline can feel a little nebulous and disjointed as a result"*. Moreover, GameSpot commented that *"trivial minigames have been creeping into the Final Fantasy games at an alarming rate over the last few years, and in this regard, X-2 is definitely the most egregious offender in the series"*. Despite these comments, they praised the battle system as a *"welcome addition"*, while regarding its voice-overs and localizations as *"outstanding"*.

Another aspect of the game that has attracted criticism is the reuse of graphical designs from Final Fantasy X. One reviewer at RPGamer commented that *"there is little question that the graphics in Final Fantasy X-2 could rival just about any other RPG on the market ... [but] one does not get ... [the impression] that the graphics have been improved in any significant way since Final Fantasy X"*.

The game's soundtrack was met with mixed feelings, because Final Fantasy X-2's score was the first in the series without input from Nobuo Uematsu, composer of all previous games in the main series, and because of the change to a distinct J-pop atmosphere.

Despite the negative comments it has received, Final Fantasy X-2's critical reception has been largely positive.

Final Fantasy X-2
International + Last Mission

8.1

Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) February 19, 2004
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

On February 19, 2004 (the day before the European and PAL release of Final Fantasy X-2), a special edition was released in Japan that features two modes: International and Last Mission. While the dialogue is the English dialogue (except for Last Mission), the subtitles and menus are in Japanese.

International has general tweaks to the look, feel, speed, and dialogue; as well as two extra dresspheres, new Garment Grids, and the inclusion of a Creature Creator system similar to the Monster Arena of Final Fantasy X where fiends can be captured, trained and used in battle. Among these are Almighty Shinra (a demonic-energy infused Shinra) and Major Numerus (the final boss of Last Mission, a four-headed snake beast that rivals other Final Fantasy bosses for the spot of most difficult).

Ultimate Hits

Many of the Final Fantasy X and Final Fantasy X-2 non-player characters can be trained and used in battle, including Tidus, Auron, Seymour, Lulu, Kimahri, Lucil, Nooj, Baralai, and several others. Over 150 additional party members can be gained through this system, with the majority having their own small storylines and endings (some including familiar faces, such as Seymour and Jecht).

Last Mission is a storyline-based mission set three months following the defeat of Vegnagun where Yuna, Rikku, and Paine meet up for the first time since going their separate ways after their victory to explore the recently-discovered Iutycyr Tower. The tower has 80 levels with a boss battle on every 20th level. On every 10th level, the girls discuss the current events in their lives and in Spira, adding many post-game conclusions for many people the girls encountered three months prior. These conversations are altered depending on how the player begins the mission.

Selecting New Game at the start screen prompts the player to load a save game file from Final Fantasy X-2 normal or International, or to begin without loading. When beginning from scratch, the dialogue is based on the normal ending of Final Fantasy X-2. If the player loads a save game file with the happy or perfect ending, Yuna will talk about her new life with Tidus on Besaid Island at 30th floor. It is possible to remove certain pieces of dialogue: i.e., at one point the girls mention Wakka and Lulu's baby, Vidina, has had his first tooth, but by loading a save game set before completing Besaid in Chapter 5, any references to Vidina will be removed as the girls have not met him.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

FINAL FANTASY 11

by: PSM2 2002 Jan #18

It's already being beta tested in Japan in an on-line capacity. This should be as global a fantasy as you can get.

FINAL FANTASY 10 may not be due to hit the UK until the middle of next year, but Square are already nearing completion of its sequel. *FF11* marks a huge departure from its predecessors. All the previous RPGs in the series were story-driven; the player's involvement was largely set on rails, and the battles and puzzles were essentially obstacles to overcome so you could continue with the plot. But *FF11* has no such restrictions, and is a go-anywhere, do-anything 'massively multi-player' on-line experience, set in the *Final Fantasy* universe.

Thousand of players take part at once, and it's the interaction between them that's at the heart of the game. Yes, there are quests, side-plots and missions to achieve, but the main objective is to develop your character - building your skills, increasing your arsenal, and becoming a bigger fish in a world where everyone's striving to be top dog. Or dogfish.

To even get even a whiff of the game at the moment you need to live in Japan, and sign up as one of the limited number of beta testers. Luckily, we know a man who can, and managed to grab some early on-line hands-on insight.

Before you play, you need to create a character for yourself, and a huge amount of detail has gone into the creation system editor. So far, there are three races to play as: Humes - humans to you and us - are the all-rounders of the world; Elven are a tall, strong, pointy-eared race who make good fighters; and Tarutaru - cute, cuddly, Hobbity things - and handy when it comes to weaving magic.

You can choose to play as either male or female characters, and a simple-yet-complex set of attributes results in an a quite astounding array of possibilities.

The world is populated by all manner of creatures - some trustworthy, others decidedly not - and it's these evil beings that threaten the largely peaceful world of Vana Dir. To prevent them from getting out of control and causing the land to spiral into chaos you have to find some crystals. These, apparently, keep the good/evil balance in equilibrium. To ensure things run smoothly a team of dedicated gamesmasters are constantly working behind the scenes to keep the world populated with evil to fight, and to ensure that there are fresh adventures to take part in. And, of course, the world keeps on turning whether you happen to be on-line or not. Square have set up a subsidiary called PlayOnline to run this (and, excitingly, other future on-line games).

We haven't heard any solid decision on how you'll end up paying for the service, or when it'll be launched in the UK, but we'll be looking at the potential cost of on-line adventuring soon.

ON-LINE OFF RAILS?

by: PSM2 2002 May #22

Rumours suggest *FF11 may NEVER reach the UK, while the future of on-line gaming looks hazy.*

According to a trusted PSM2 Japanese source, *Final Fantasy 11* may never be released in Europe, potentially jeopardising the UK's on-line PS2 network. Translation difficulties aside, Square are said to be concerned about the availability of the European HDD - essential for *FF11* - and may prefer to focus on the, apparently smoother, PC version.

The news is hardly surprising. SCEE had Chris Deering recently said that *FF11* wouldn't reach the UK until 2004. More disturbingly, while Sony have confirmed their on-line plans in the US and Japan, the UK situation has been left precariously dangling - among rumours of an insufficient, and financially unviable Broadband network to support on-line gaming. A source close to PS2's on-line trials wouldn't discuss matters on the record, but intimated that Telewest - Sony's key UK partner - wouldn't be rushed into announcing their on-line plans until they were watertight, suggesting there was nothing to worry about. Durlacher was more cautious. "Broadband console gaming will undoubtedly be a critical part of the games business in the future, just not in the next few years."

The bottom line? Inside betting suggests that SCEE's on-line push will start in September, closely resembling the US model. From day one, games will be able to but a Broadband/Narrowband Network Adaptor for around £40, with the option to add a Hard Disk Drive (HDD) around Christmas. Contrary to previous reports. the Network Adaptor screws into the rear bay of the PS2, not via the HDD. Sony *won't* act as an Internet Service Provider (ISP), but will allow users to connect via their existing provider, such as Telewest.

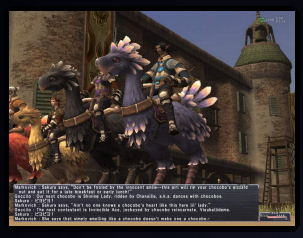
Intriguingly, the US announcement suggested that Sony were no longer interested in providing a standard web browser, but focusing on entertainment. Basically, to get on-line, gamers would need to pay for the Network Adapter (about £40), a compatible game (£40) and their existing ISP connection costs (say £10 per month for Narrowband access).

The first games should include SOCOM, Frequency, Tribes and - yes - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4, with other games to include token on-line options, such as score tables.

Industry whispers hint that - as first rumoured in PSM2 #20 - PS2'll soon be available for £200 bundled with an HDD and Network Adapter. Could 'PS2.5' really be a reality by Christmas?

Final Fantasy XI

8.5



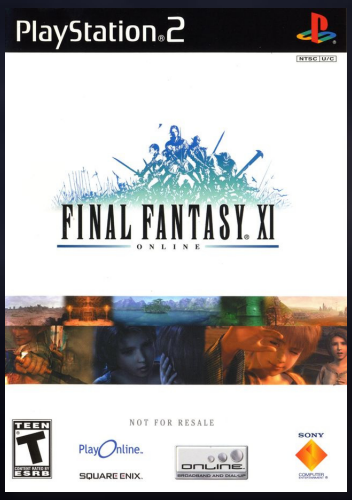
Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	SquareSoft, Square Enix, (us) SCEA
Release date	MMORPG
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

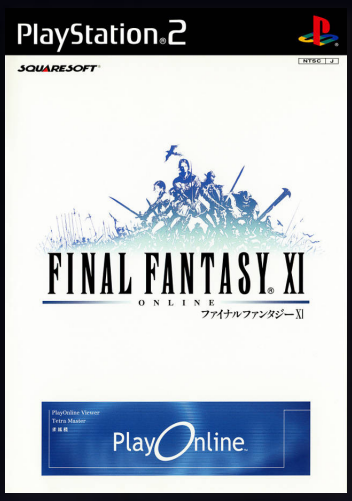
Final Fantasy XI, also known as Final Fantasy XI Online, is a MMORPG, developed and published by Square as part of the Final Fantasy series. Designed and produced by Hiromichi Tanaka, it was released in Japan on May 16, 2002, for PlayStation 2 and Windows-based computers in November of that year. The game was the first MMORPG to offer cross-platform play between PlayStation 2 and PC. It was also the Xbox 360's first MMORPG. All versions of the game require a monthly subscription to play.

The story is set in the fantasy world of Vana'diel, where player-created avatars can both compete and cooperate in a variety of objectives to develop an assortment of jobs, skills, and earn in-game item rewards. Players can undertake an array of quests and progress through the in-game hierarchy and through the major plot of the game. Since its debut in 2002, five expansion packs have been released along with six add-on scenarios. Each expansion pack and add-on brings a new major storyline to the Final Fantasy XI world, along with numerous areas, quests, events and item rewards.

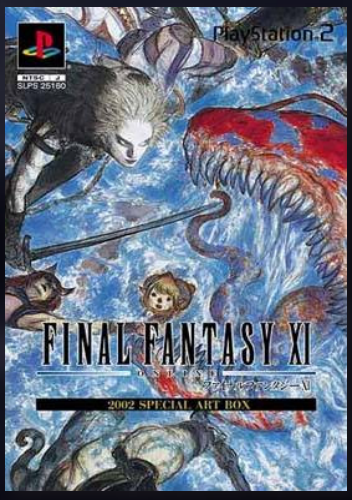
The setting of Final Fantasy XI is the world of Vana'diel, a rich world with diverse climates, ranging from northern glaciers and southern deserts, to ethereal realms and sky landmasses. Vana'diel is divided into a number of regions, which are subdivided into areas known as "zones". These zones are available for exploration and consist of outdoor areas, dungeons, cities, and towns. Players are able to explore a portion of Vana'diel, including the Middle Lands, Near East, and with the release of Seekers of Adoulin, the near west. Six city states exist in the available lands, The Republic of Bastok, The Kingdom of San d'Oria, The Federation of Windurst, The Grand Duchy of Jeuno, The Empire of Aht Urhgan and the Sacred City of Adoulin. While most areas are accessible by walking, various modes of transportation, ranging from the classic Final Fantasy Chocobo and airships to special spells, facilitate movement across the game world.

Ancient lore states that Vana'diel was created as a playground for the Gods and their chil-





Special Art Pack



dren, who themselves were spawned from an enormous and sentient Crystal. Eventually wishing to be one with the Gods, the children constructed a pathway to paradise. They were smote down for their insolence, however, and their cities cast to the bottom of the sea. After seeing the destruction of her children and filled with sadness, the Goddess Altana wept five tears that gave life to the five Enlightened Races of Vana'diel. The God of Twilight, Promathia, condemned her weakness, however, and the life that arose from it. Promathia cursed the five races with eternal conflict amongst themselves by bringing forth their darkest attributes: the apathy of the Humes, the arrogance of the Elvaan, the rage of the Galka, the cowardice of the Tarutaru, and the envy of the Mithra. He created the Beastmen, commanding them to forever fight the people of Vana'diel and occupy their minds, so these children would never have time to group together and construct a pathway like the ones before them. The creation lore's sentient Crystal, Gods, Children, and the truths behind them feature as major plot points in several Final Fantasy XI expansion packs, while the Beastmen are some of the game's main antagonists.

The events of the game are set 20 years after the Crystal War, a devastating war where the Middle Land nations of Bastok, San d'Oria and Windurst fought and defeated the Shadow Lord and his army of Beastmen. Players deal with the aftermath of this conflict in the original story, and may travel back in time to aid in the war effort with the expansion pack Wings of the Goddess. Several parallel worlds are available, such as Dynamis and Abyssea, in which the beastmen won the Crystal War and conquered the land.

Final Fantasy XI features five playable races known as the "Enlightened Races":

Hume

Originating from the city of Bastok, Humes are the most common race in Vana'diel and are known for their intelligence and high level of skill in numerous areas. Humes have equally balanced abilities, and are said to be cursed with the sin of apathy. They serve as the game's human race.

Galka

A hulking race of powerful warriors, the Galka's capital city was destroyed by war 600 years ago. Many of the surviving Galka settled in Bastok, and are currently used by the city as cheap underclass labour. The Galka do not have a female counterpart, but reproduce through reincarnation. They possess the highest HP and vitality in the game, but also the lowest MP. The Galka are cursed with rage.

Elvaan

A race of proud warriors, the Elvaan's home city is the Kingdom of San d'Oria. Elvaan have an unshakable pride and faith in their beliefs, and many eschew the business world, preferring an austere lifestyle as skilled sword fighters. The Elvaan race possess high strength and mind, but low MP and intelligence. Elvaan are said to be cursed with the sin of arrogance.

Mithra

The Mithra are a race of hunters who live alongside the Tarutaru in Windurst. They are known for their energy, curiosity, and their penchant for causing playful mischief. Due to a gender imbalance in their race males are a rarity, and so only female mithra leave the home, making females the only playable gender. Mithra possess high dexterity and agility, but lower HP and charisma. Mithra are cursed with envy.

Tarutaru

A race of skilled magic from the Federation of Windurst, the Tarutaru physically resemble children, however their size does not reflect their age. Tarutaru are playful yet cunning. They possess the highest MP and intelligence of all the races, but the lowest HP and strength. Tarutaru are said to be cursed with cowardice.

In addition to the playable races, there are two other non-playable Enlightened Races, known as the Zilart and the Kuluu. These ancient races were thought extinct, and are the focus of the first two-game expansions. There is also a large supporting cast of NPCs involved in quests, missions and the game's storylines. The game features several typical Final Fantasy fiends, including Goblins, Sahagins and Tonberries. Several of these races are known as Beastmen, a distinction made between fiends who possess higher than average intelligence, exhibiting self-awareness, emotions, culture, and religion. The complex relationship, bigoted views, and reasons of conflict between the Enlightened Races and Beastmen is a plot point throughout the game.

Final Fantasy XI is represented in the Dissidia game series by Shantotto, a female Tarutaru Black Mage from the Windurst storyline, voiced by famed voice actress Megumi Hayashibara in the Japanese version and Candi Milo in English version. The game's prequel adds Prishe, a female Elvaan from Tavnazia, who is the main character in the Chains of Promathia expansion pack.

Final Fantasy XI is a MMORPG, and differs from previous titles in the series in several ways. Unlike the predefined main characters of previous Final Fantasy titles, players are able to customize their characters in limited ways, including selecting from one of five races and choosing their gender, facial style, hair color, body size, job, and nation allegiance. Also diverging from previous games in the series, the game takes place in a fully three-dimensional landscape with enemies freely roaming in it, allowing battles to occur in real time as opposed to the random encounters used in previous games - a trend continued in every numbered Final Fantasy title since.

There are currently 16 public game worlds available for play, down from 32 at the game's height, with approximately 15,000 to 20,000 players in each. A private Test Server was opened to eligible players to aid in feedback of updates in development for the game in mid-2011. The servers are named after summoned monsters from previous Final Fantasy titles, such as Ifrit and Diabolos. Players have the ability to move between servers, though Square-Enix charges a "world transfer" fee to do so. There are no region-specific or system-specific servers, and unlike most online games, players of different languages play in the same world and can interact through automatic language translation from a library of translated phrases. The game servers are run by Square-Enix as part of their PlayOnline network.

Players have the option of using any combination of a keyboard and controller to play Final Fantasy XI. While by default, a player using a PlayStation 2 uses a virtual/in-game keyboard option, the player is able to use an external keyboard that is USB compatible for communication within the game. The HUD in Final Fantasy XI consists of a log window, menus, and several game information elements. The log window at the bottom of the screen displays system messages, battle messages, and text input by other players. Players may choose to filter what appears in the log window. "Menus" allow the player to access different commands, status windows, and configuration options. The "action command menu" appears just above the log window and gives the player several options to interact with the game world. Several menu options are available through the use of keyboard shortcuts, as well.

Story related gameplay in Final Fantasy XI consists of two major components: missions, through which the main storyline of the game is told, and quests, which do not advance the main storyline, but fill out the game's fantasy world. Completing missions allows a player to advance in rank, which grants access to new areas, several privileges, and various other storylines. At first, a player may only complete missions for his home nation, though they are able to change allegiances later on, allowing access to other nations' storylines. Quests may be undertaken for their various rewards, or to acquire "fame," which allows a character to become well-known and respected by NPCs; a higher fame rating will open up new interactions and quests with NPCs. At release, over one hundred quests were available to play and each expansion pack has added its own set of missions and quests. Players obtain in-game money known as gil by completing missions, quests and defeating Beastmen, though unlike previous Final Fantasy games, these monsters drop only small amounts. Gil can then be exchanged amongst players for goods through the Auction House, or be used to purchase items and rewards from NPCs.

Unlike some MMORPGs, there is very little focus on PvP combat, instead the game revolves around player versus environment (PvE). There are numerous PvE activities and events for players to partake in, including instanced activities and shared spaces activities. Some instanced events include Dynamis, Salvage, Assault and Nyzul Isle, which involve anywhere between 6 and 64 players. These battle grounds give players a series of objectives to overcome or complete and enemies to defeat, generally within a certain time frame. Popular shared spaces activities include hunting Notorious Monsters, fiends that rarely appear and drop precious loot.

The only way to attack other players in PvP is to enter one of two competition activities known as "Conflict". The first form of competition, called Ballista, involves players competing to score points by throwing petras into a castle-like structure known as a Rook. The second form is known as "Brenner", and features a capture the flag type system.

From time to time special seasonal festivals and events are held. They last only for a set period of time and offer a variety of fun or useful rewards. Many events have changed over time, adding new features and eliminating old ones. These events are geared towards any level, often restricting players to level 1, so that veterans and novice players alike can join in together. Events celebrated are often thematically based on real life equivalents, for example: Valentione's Day in place of Valentine's Day, the Egg Hunt Eggstravaganza in place of Easter, and the Starlight Celebration in place of Christmas.

Battles in Final Fantasy XI take place in the world in which players move around, a first in the series, where battle had previously taken place in a separate screen via random encounters. The surprise of the random encounter system is achieved via aggressive monsters, who will attack players based on different factors such as sight and sound. This format would continue in future Final Fantasy games. Monsters within the game operate under a system of "claim" and "enmity". A monster is claimed the moment a player performs any offensive action upon it, whether physical, magical or ability related. With some exceptions, once a monster is claimed it can only be attacked by players in the party or alliance of the player that claimed it. A monster will focus its attention on whoever has built up the most enmity. Players have several means at their disposal, including spells, abilities and items, to build up enmity or shed it to their advantage in battle - a factor that features heavily in group, or "party" play.

To defeat more powerful monsters and gain experience points efficiently, players can join

a party. A regular party has room for six members. Like in many other games, a well-balanced party will consist of several archetypes- namely a healer, a tank (the party member with high defense that will be the main target of the monster), and the damage dealer. The enmity system comes into play heavily in parties, as players try to keep the monsters attention off fragile jobs and on the tanks. A well-balanced team working together is the only way to defeat many of the game's enemies.

A party can expand into an alliance, with up to three parties combined, with a total of 18 players. Alliances are necessary to complete more difficult challenges: including missions, quests, nation or territory driven events, and defeating notorious monsters. Much of end-game play consists of alliance forces overcoming these higher level challenges and can even allow several alliances to enter into specific instances owned by a group of players (e.g. Dynamis instances entry is controlled by an hourglass item).

Final Fantasy XI's incarnation of Limit Breaks are "Weapon Skills". Physical damage given and received fills a Tactical Points (TP) bar, to a maximum of 300. Any amount above 100 is able to be used up by being channelled into a weapon skill. These skills vary in effect depending on job class, what weapon is equipped, how full the TP bar is, and how proficient the player is with the weapon. If partying with other players, one may use these weapon skills in succession in order to create a "Skillchain". A skillchain creates additional damage after a series of weapon skills are used. Building on this even further, magic used on a skillchain at the right time will receive a boost to its damage; this is called a "Magic Burst". In order to create the best possible skillchains and magic bursts, players must work together, focusing on each other's actions and timing.

Final Fantasy XI uses the concept of changing Jobs in a similar fashion to Final Fantasy III, and currently has twenty-two Jobs as of the latest expansion pack in 2013. There are six "standard Jobs" available to choose from at the start of the game. After one standard Job has reached Level 30, the "extra Jobs" are accessible upon completing certain quests. Players are able to change their jobs any time from inside their house or by speaking with a Nomad Moogle. In June 2010, the long-standing level limit of 75 was incrementally increased to the higher level cap of 99, finishing in the December 2011 version update.

Jobs have a combination of unique "job traits", "job abilities", and magic spells, giving them a specific role within group play due to their area of expertise. Job traits are passive abilities that are always in effect, while job abilities must be activated by the player in order to come into effect. They last a limited time and have a "cooldown" period before they can be used again. Magic spells are available to certain jobs, and in addition to a cooldown period, they often consume MP or some form of item in order to be cast, while at the same time requiring the user to stand still. Additionally, each job has a special one-hour ability that performs an extraordinary function.

The unique system of Final Fantasy XI's job system is the "Support Job". This system allows a player to augment their character with abilities, traits, and spells from another chosen job, at half the level of their current job. For instance, a Level 20 Warrior setting Ninja as their support job would allow them to use all Ninja abilities, traits, and spells up to that of a level 10 Ninja, while still primarily being a Level 20 Warrior. The support job system allows for job-merges never before seen in the Final Fan-

tasy series. However, there are some exceptions to the system. One-hour abilities and other abilities deemed signature to a particular job (such as Call Wyvern for Dragoons) are restricted to being used only on the main job.

In addition to completing quests and missions, players can participate in several side-minigames and other activities. One such minigame is fishing, where players can measure their strength against the fish they attempt to catch. Another is clamming, where players collect as many fish or sea creatures as possible without going over their bucket's size limit. Gardening allows players to raise plants in their residence, or "Mog House" as it is known in the game. The raising and breeding of Chocobos was a long-requested activity enabled in the summer 2006 update. Chocobo racing began in March 2007, which allowed for the racing of player-raised Chocobos against NPCs. Winning racers can earn "Chocobucks", which can be used to buy, for example, items that assist Chocobo breeding.

An important part of the game is the accumulation of items, especially rare ones, which allow players to create powerful weapons, armour and food. There are many ways to obtain items, such as harvesting, excavating, logging, mining, defeating monsters, and digging by using Chocobos. Square Enix attempted to increase the opportunity for players to find rare items in order to equalize the game and stop the practice of "gil selling", or exchanging real money for in-game items. The item auction system was shut down temporarily once due to some players exploiting the system. Items can be created by consuming elemental crystals (obtained by fighting monsters) with other ingredients in a process called "synthesis". Recipe results can vary widely based on the player's skill, the quality of the player's equipment worn, and the ingredients used. There is large speculation (though nothing evidently documented yet) about the moon phase, direction the player is facing, in-game day (every day of the week is assigned an element), and even time of day the synthesis is performed to either increase or reduce the results of the recipe.

Final Fantasy XI has a largely player-based economy, with a heavy reliance on auction houses in each of the major cities of Vana'diel. There are certain economic controls in place mainly in the form of fees for putting items up for auction. Transportation, auction house, item storage, and fees do not go to players; these gil sinks effectively remove money from the economy to prevent inflation. The city of Jeuno used to levy a tax on bazaar purchases inside the city, but it was removed in a patch in the December 2008 version update.

Square Enix has stated that the trade of items for real currency is officially a violation of the Terms of Service for Final Fantasy XI. In early 2006, Square Enix discovered that a group of players had found a way to generate game currency and exchange it for real currency, which, in turn, drove up prices for all items across the game. In response, 700 accounts were permanently banned and 300 billion gil was removed

from circulation. In July 2006, Square Enix banned or suspended over 8,000 other accounts for similar manipulation and commerce. Since 2006, Square Enix has regularly banned accounts found to be in violation of the terms, some of them using third-party tools, effectively removing billions of gil from the in-game economy.

The idea to develop Final Fantasy XI as an online game was conceived by Hironobu Sakaguchi when establishing Square Pictures headquarters in Hawaii. Impressed by western MMORPGs that he discovered there, such as EverQuest, Sakaguchi convinced Square to begin the development of their own MMORPG and suggested that it be based on the Final Fantasy series. The team responsible for Chrono Cross was assigned to the development of Final Fantasy XI after the English localization of the former title. Development began in November 1999. The game was the first developed under Square's new philosophy to develop for "all platforms and media". Hiromichi Tanaka, the producer of the game, has stated Final Fantasy XI is heavily influenced by Final Fantasy III, especially in its battle and magic systems. According to Tanaka, Square put in Final Fantasy XI what they could not put in the first Final Fantasy titles due to technical limitations, thus making Final Fantasy XI the *"most [representative] Final Fantasy of all the episodes"*. The game was developed and ran on the Nvidia GeForce 4 Ti GPU, which the President of Square Yoichi Wada described as the most powerful graphics processor available at the time. The game cost two to three billion yen (~$17–25 million) to create along with the PlayOnline Network Service and was assumed to become profitable over a five-year timespan. By creating a unified game world instead of different ones balkanized by language, development costs were cut 66%. Since recurring monsters of the series are known by different names in the Japanese and English versions of the other installments, it was decided for Final Fantasy XI to use both Japanese and English names for different varieties of the same monsters.

It was originally announced that there would be a simultaneous release on the PlayStation 2 and Windows as well as concurrent Japanese and American release, but this was later changed. There was also discussion of an Xbox release, but it was abandoned mainly because of its small 8 GB hard drive. Originally announced in January 2000 at the Yokohama Millennium Conference, there was a great deal of negative press. There were questions raised about naming the game the eleventh in the series, since it was not clear whether the game would have a structured story, which it ended up having, and the title of Final Fantasy Online was suggested. Following an August 2001 beta test in Japan, a public Japanese beta test was done in December 2001.

Following its PC release, Final Fantasy XI was listed as one of IGN's most anticipated PlayStation 2 games of 2004. Sony launched a multimillion-dollar ad campaign to promote Final Fantasy XI along with the PlayStation 2 hard drive add-on which the game required. Having been released on the PlayStation 2 as well as the personal computer, it became the first cross-platform MMORPG ever created. On June 14, 2002, the game server was down for four hours for maintenance to the database servers, bug fixes on the text interface, and a new patch for the game client. This is thought to be the first patch ever released for a console game. Other early issues included complaints by American players that experienced Japanese players had already completed all the quests. Square Enix responded by adding new servers in order to have game worlds with fewer expert players.

Final Fantasy XI has continued to update its software to allow the game to run on new consoles. On 8 March 2007, a patch was released to enable gameplay in French and German. Square Enix noted that Nintendo's use of "friend codes" was the primary reason Final Fantasy XI was not brought to the Wii. In December 2006, the PlayStation 2 versions of PlayOnline and Final Fantasy XI were able to install and run on the PlayStation 3. The Vana'diel Collection 2008 discs for the PlayStation 2 had installation issues on the PlayStation 3, causing them to be unusable at first since they weren't on Sony's list of HDD compatible titles in the firmware the PlayStation 3 had at the time. This problem was fixed on December 18, 2007 when Sony released firmware update 2.10 for the PlayStation 3. This allowed all backwards compatible models—20GB model #CECHB01, 60GB model #CECHA01 and 80GB model #CECHE01—to play FFXI. After working with Microsoft to resolve Final Fantasy XI's incompatibility issues with Windows Vista, Square Enix released a downloadable version of the

PlayOnline client which is compatible with the operating system, although small bugs have appeared.

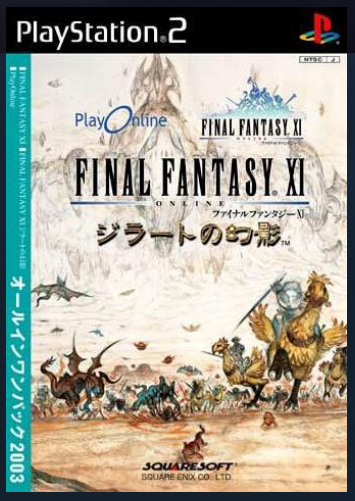
On September 1, 2010, Akihiko Matsui became the director of Final Fantasy XI. Only three months later, on December 10, 2010, Matsui left the Final Fantasy XI team to work as "Lead Combat System Designer" on Square Enix's new MMO, Final Fantasy XIV. His replacement as director of Final Fantasy XI is Mizuki Ito. On July 13, 2011, information from a Famitsu interview with former Final Fantasy XI producer Hiromichi Tanaka revealed that Square Enix is looking into the possibility of porting Final Fantasy XI to Sony PlayStation Vita. On June 24, 2012, at the end of VanaFest 2012, a festival in Yokohama, Japan to celebrate 2012's tenth anniversary of the Japanese launch of Final Fantasy XI, Hiromichi Tanaka announced that, due to health reasons, he was stepping down as producer of the game and leaving Square-Enix. Akihiko Matsui has been selected to replace him.

In 2006, between 200,000 and 300,000 active players logged in per day, with 500,000 total active players and around 150,000 online at any one time. In April 2009, Square Enix announced that the total number of active characters exceeded 2 million for the first time. In June 2012, Square Enix president Yoichi Wada announced that Final Fantasy XI had become the most profitable title in the Final Fantasy series.

The music of Final Fantasy XI was scored by Naoshi Mizuta, Kumi Tanioka, and Nobuo Uematsu. Composer Yasunori Mitsuda was also asked to contribute, but at the time he was unable to do so, as he was scoring the music for Xenosaga. The game's five expansion packs since were scored by Mizuta alone, after Tanioka left to pursue other projects and Uematsu left Square Enix. The opening of the game features choral music with lyrics in Esperanto. According to Uematsu, the choice of language was meant to symbolize the developers' hope that their online game could contribute to cross-cultural communication and cooperation. He also noted the increased difficulty of scoring a game for which there was no linear plotline, a major change from the previous Final Fantasy games. It was the first game in the series for which he composed while he was no longer a Square Enix employee. New music has been employed for special events, such as a holiday score titled "Jeuno -Starlight Celebration-" which can be heard in the city of Jeuno each mid-to-late December since 2004.

Final Fantasy XI has additions released every few years. Expansion packs add new story, jobs, zones, quests, and content to the game, while add-ons are smaller in scale, adding a smaller selection of the aforementioned items. All of the expansions and add-ons have been released on PlayStation 2, Windows, and Xbox 360, with the exception of Seekers of Adoulin, which did not see a PlayStation 2 release outside Japan.

Final Fantasy XI has additions released every few years. Expansion packs add new story, jobs, zones, quests, and content to the game, while add-ons are smaller in scale, adding a smaller selection of the aforementioned items. All of the expansions and add-ons have been released on PlayStation 2, Windows, and Xbox 360, with the exception of Seekers of Adoulin, which did not see a PlayStation 2 release outside Japan.



Rise of the Zilart

Release date April 17, 2003

Immediately following the original Final Fantasy XI storyline, the adventurer finds out that the Archduke of Jeuno and his brother are princes of the ancient Zilart race who survived extinction. The adventurer must fight to stop them from opening the Gate of the Gods, which will destroy Vana'diel as we know it.

This expansion pack brings several new areas, Jobs, quests, and a new mission storyline to the game.

Rise of the Zilart is the first expansion pack in Final Fantasy XI and was only officially released in Japan since the main gameitself had not been released for other regions. As such, this expansion would come bundled together with the core game when it launched in all other regions.

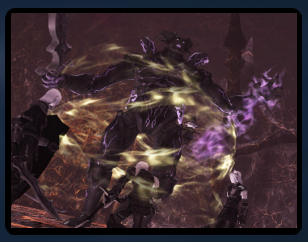
Three new Advanced jobs were released as a part of Rise of the Zilart. Although the Summoner job was added in the same update, it can be unlocked without having the expansion installed and registered.

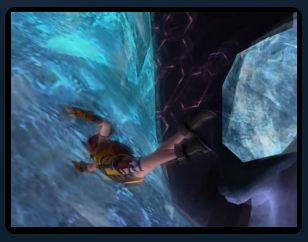
Samurai: Samurais herald from the Far East and specialize in the use of the great katana. They are also masters of the skillchain with their ability to control TP use and generation. This allows them to use Weapon Skills far more often than other jobs.

Ninja: Ninjas are highly evasive fighters that are skilled in the use of the katana. They specialize in the use of ninja tools and throwing weapons in battle, using them to attack, cast magic without the use of MP, weaken the enemy and also to protect themselves.

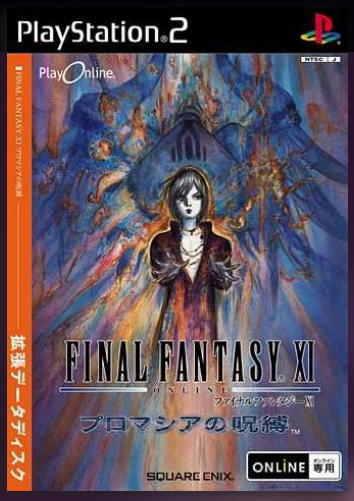
Dragoon: Dragoons are masters of the polearm and specialize in using leaping attacks against their foes to both damage and elude them. They are aided by pet wyverns which can use magical breaths that can either damage their missions before they are able to start on Rise of the Zilart main story missions. The three nation's stories are also expanded upon in in this expansion, resulting in the rise to Rank 10. New quests are also available for players to undertake.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

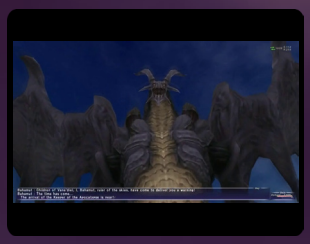


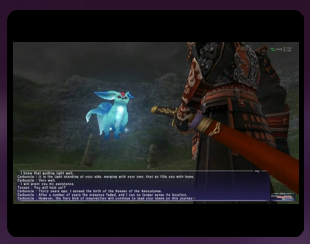


7.7



J N





Chains of Promathia

Release date September 21, 2004

A phenomenon known as "The Emptiness" is found to be eating away at the heart of Vana'diel and the Wyrmking Bahamut declares that the arrival of the Keeper of the Apocalypse is near. A mysterious pale child seems to be at the center of the strange mystery that revolves around the Twilight God Promathia.

Final Fantasy XI: Chains of Promathia is the second expansion pack for Final Fantasy XI. This expansion pack brings several new areas, quests, and a new mission storyline to the game. It is also the only expansion thus far to not feature additional jobs.

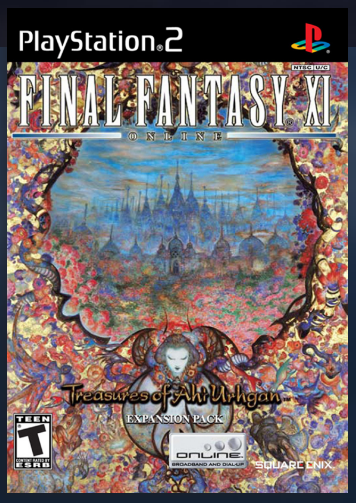
Chains of Promathia, commonly referred to as CoP by English players, is the first expansion to come out after Final Fantasy XI was released outside of Japan. It was designed to be a challenge for hardcore players while also focusing on the delivery of an immersive story with an ensemble cast. For this reason, Chains of Promathia had the longest storyline and some of the hardest missions found in Final Fantasy XI at its release. The difficulty of these missions have since been lowered after years of feedback from players. The sheer number of characters, story arcs and extensive cut-scenes with detailed storytelling were also unprecedented in the game at the time of its release.

As Chains of Promathia is strongly focused on new missions, new content (in particular new areas) can be progressively unlocked by clearing the missions. Unlike with Rise of the Zilart, there are no prerequisites required to start on main story missions. New quests are also available for players to undertake.

As of the June 2010 update, the level caps of the Chains of Promathia areas and mission battlefield events have been lifted, and now only apply to empty notorious monster (ENM) battles and Chains of Promathia quests with level restrictions such as "The Big One" and "Return to the Depths". Provided a character is sufficiently leveled, many early missions can now be completed solo with relative ease.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

8.7



J N

Treasures of Aht Urhgan

Release date April 18, 2006

The xenophobic Aht Urhgan Empire opens the borders to the Middle Lands after years of self-imposed isolation. Worried about this new power, the leaders of each city send representatives to assess the situation. The adventurer is chosen for the task of unearthing the Empire's true intentions, and begins to uncover the secrets of the life-giving Astral Candescence, the Dark Rider, and the history of this mysterious land.

Final Fantasy XI: Treasures of Aht Urhgan is the third expansion for Final Fantasy XI.

The expansion takes place in the Empire of Aht Urhgan, the first new nation added to Final Fantasy XI, in the lands of the Near East.

New job classes include;

Blue Mage: Blue Mages are masters of the legendary arts of Aht Urhgan - blue magic. Along with their elegant curved swords for close-ranged combat, Blue Mages can employ abilities learnt from enemies to protect themselves and decimate enemies.

Corsair: Corsairs are descendants of Near Eastern pirates. Adept in the use of their signature Hexagun, Corsairs also make use of luck-based dice roll abilities to buff their allies and shift the tides of battle in their favor.

Puppetmaster: Masters of the Aht Urhgan invention known as the automaton, Puppetmasters are agile wandering performers who rely on hand-to-hand attacks and the use of their customizable puppet to confound their enemies.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

8.7

J N

Wings of the Goddess

Release date November 20, 2007

Cavernous Maws appearing all over the land have been found to teleport adventurers twenty years back in time, when the Crystal War raged. The adventurer is met by Cait Sith, who asks for help in easing the suffering of the people in this time period. However, there are others who would alter the course of history to suit their own ends as well.

Final Fantasy XI: Wings of the Goddess is the fourth expansion pack for Final Fantasy XI. The expansion is based in Vana'diel's past and offers new jobs. This marks the return of time travel in the Final Fantasy series; this plot point had originally been introduced as early as in Final Fantasy and was used again in Final Fantasy VIII.

Much of the story occurs in the era of the Crystal War, twenty years in the past. The main Missions in Wings of the Goddess was released gradually via patches. The final set of missions was scheduled for December 2010, just over three years after its release.

New job classes include;

Dancer: A profession that was popular during the Great War, Dancers take to the front lines, dagger in hand, weaving forbidden magicks through the divinity of dance, weakening enemies and aiding fellow combatants in battle. It is the main job class of focal character Lilisette.

Scholar: The profession of military tacticians during the Crystal War, Scholars are adept and switching between expertise in Light and Dark magic through the use of the ancient magical tome augmented with military strategies known as the Grimoire.

Wings of the Goddess introduces new music for battles and areas featured in the expansion. All tracks are composed and arranged by Naoshi Mizuta, with many of them being gradually introduced together with version updates.

With Wings of the Goddess installed, the track "Wings of the Goddess" replaces "Vana'diel March" in the title screen. It reverts to the original title screen music after it fully plays once.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

In addition to the Expansion Packs, there are add-on chapters. Unlike full expansion packs, each add-on is delivered completely within a single version update. The first three are add-on scenarios that introduce side stories in existing areas while the last three are battle area add-ons that focus on high level battles in the alternate reality of Abyssea.

A Crystalline Prophecy - Ode of Life Bestowing

Release date March 22, 2009 (US, JP)

A giant crystal appears in the skies above Jeuno, triggering a series of unexplained happenings across the land. The adventurer must set forth to unravel the mysteries of this primordial crystal that holds the secrets of Vana'diel's past and who the young boy resembling Aldo is.

Final Fantasy XI: A Crystalline Prophecy - Ode of Life Bestowing is the first of three downloadable scenario add-ons for Final Fantasy XI. It was originally sold online for $9.99 and could only be downloaded through the PlayOnline network as part of a regular version update. It was the first add-on to Final Fantasy XI that was released as a download-only purchase at its launch and is now available as part of the Ultimate Collection for Final Fantasy XI.

A Crystalline Prophecy focuses on exploring the story aspect of Final Fantasy XI with a short series of missions, using mainly content previously introduced in Rise of the Zilart. As such, the expansion Rise of the Zilart must be installed first. It does not introduce any new areas, jobs, quests, or battlefield events.

Players must be level 10 and above to participate in the add-on scenario missions.

Unlike the story missions from past expansions, A Crystalline Prophecy missions may be repeated by players for rewards. Players who do not have progress in these missions or have yet to purchase the add-ons are still able to assist others in clearing them but will not be awarded accordingly.

A number of "Key" key items are rewarded to players when attempting the missions for the first time and also repeating them. These keys may be used to open a Treasure Coffer in the Tenshodo Headquarters in exchange for a variety of rewards including items, magic spell scrolls, augmented gear and exclusive pieces of body equipment.

A Crystalline Prophecy adds two new track to Final Fantasy XI.

The first track is "Echoes of Creation" and the second track is "FINAL FANTASY / FINAL FANTASY XI Version". This marks the first appearance of this theme in Final Fantasy XI.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

A Moogle Kupo d'Etat - Evil in Small Doses

Release date July 20, 2009 (US, JP)

It all started with an innocent drop of rainwater and a rickety, ramshackle Mog House desperately in need of repairs. Little did anyone suspect that this was only the beginning of a harrowing nightmare unheard of in the annals of mooglekind.

Final Fantasy XI: A Moogle Kupo d'Etat - Evil in Small Doses is the second add-on scenario for Final Fantasy XI. It was originally sold online for $9.99 and could only be downloaded through the PlayOnline network. It is now also available on disc in the Ultimate Collection of Final Fantasy XI. Like the previous add-on scenario, it focuses on exploring the story of Final Fantasy XI through a series of missions and does not introduce new locations or jobs.

A Moogle Kupo d'Etat adds only one new track to Final Fantasy XI, "Luck of the Mog", used for the final battlefield mission and the trailer for the scenario add-on.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

A Shantotto Ascension: The Legend Torn, Her Empire Born

Release date November 11, 2009 (US, JP)

The eccentric Doctor Shantotto returned to Windurst one day after a sudden and unexplained absence, shocking her colleagues with behavior so outrageous it put her old self to shame. When she goes so far as to proclaim herself ruler of her own empire, the adventurer must embark on a quest to discover the truth behind her alarming shift in personality.

Like the previous two add-on scenarios, it focuses on exploring the story of Final Fantasy XI and does not add new locations or jobs.

Similar to missions from Final Fantasy XI: A Crystalline Prophecy - Ode of Life Bestowing and Final Fantasy XI: A Moogle Kupo d'Etat - Evil in Small Doses, A Shantotto Ascension story missions may be repeated by players for rewards. Players who do not have progress in these missions or have yet to purchase the add-ons are still able to assist others in clearing them, but will not be awarded accordingly.

A Shantotto Ascension adds one new track, "Feast of the Ladies", which is used for the final battlefield mission as well as the trailer for the scenario add-on.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

Vision of Abyssea

Release date June 6, 2010 (US, JP)

New Cavernous Maws appear and serve as gateways to an unforgiving world long forsaken by the gods called Abyssea, where savage creatures roam and the land crumbles to chasmic depths. Its sanguine sky is an ever-present portent of looming destruction, whilst the moon is a great jewel of hope shining against a bloody veil of death.

Final Fantasy XI: Vision of Abyssea is the first of three "Battle Area Add-ons" for Final Fantasy XI released in 2010. It is set in a parallel universe to Vana'diel whose inhabitants are fighting for their lives against a powerful force known as the Abyssean Hordes. Players can fight off these hordes and complete quests in three new areas to acquire a variety of new equipment, as well as the fabled Empyrean Weapons. This is the first add-on to Final Fantasy XI that does not formally include new missions, although it adds many new quests and countless new monsters and equipment for players over level 75.

The game requires players to have both Rise of the Zilart and Wings of the Goddess expansions registered and installed to play. Characters must be level 30 or above to access Abyssea-related content.

The game does not formally include missions, but contains quests that mark the main storyline of the Abyssea add-ons. Unlike previous expansions and add-ons, Vision of Abyssea does not come with any battlefields or special Notorious Monsters. Instead, the notorious monsters that are required to progress in the storyline come from NMs that are part of Abyssea battle system.

Vision of Abyssea introduces two new tracks to Final Fantasy XI. The first track is "Abyssea - Scarlet Skies, Shadowed Plains", which plays throughout Abyssea, and the second track is "Melodies Errant", which is the party battle theme in all Abyssea areas.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

Scars of Abyssea

Release date August 23, 2010 (US, JP)

As the adventurer continue deeper into Abyssea, they discover power and riches beyond their wildest dreams. It is also there that they come upon the bastions of survivors desperately defending themselves and the strategically important Pulse Martellos against the invasion of the fell hordes.

Final Fantasy XI: Scars of Abyssea is the second of three "Battle Area Add-ons" for Final Fantasy XI. It continues the adventures in the parallel universe of Abyssea across three new areas, and introduces new varieties of equipment, such as the head, legs and foot pieces in the iconic Empyrean Armor sets. Like Final Fantasy XI: Vision of Abyssea, the content of Scars of Abyssea caters mainly to players above level 75.

Similar to Vision of Abyssea, this add-on does not come with battlefields or special Notorious Monsters, and all Notorious Monsters that are required to progress in the storyline come from NMs that are part of Abyssea battle system.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

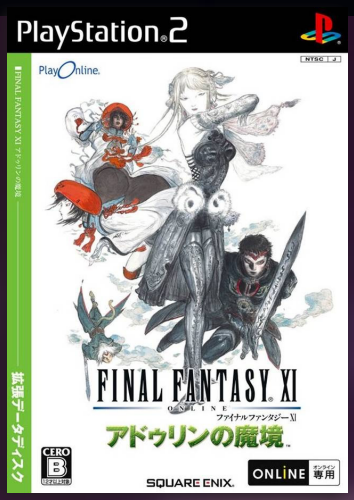
Heroes of Abyssea

Release date November 23, 2010 (US, JP)

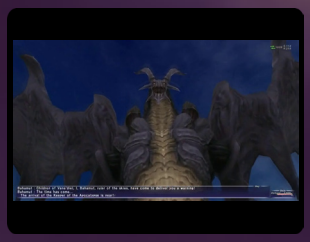
In the borderlands of Abyssea, the adventurer join the Resistance effort to subjugate the savage hordes and reclaim dominion over the land for mankind. In staking their claim as the champions of Abyssea, adventurers will come to discover the dark secrets of this world and face off against the greatest challenge yet.

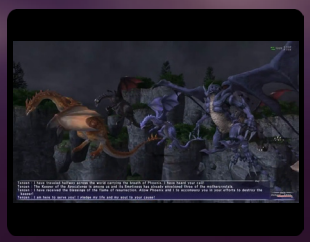
Final Fantasy XI: Scars of Abyssea is the second of three "Battle Area Add-ons" for Final Fantasy XI. It continues the adventures in the parallel universe of Abyssea across three new areas, and introduces new varieties of equipment, such as the head, legs and foot pieces in the iconic Empyrean Armor sets. Like Final Fantasy XI: Vision of Abyssea, the content of Scars of Abyssea caters mainly to players above level 75.

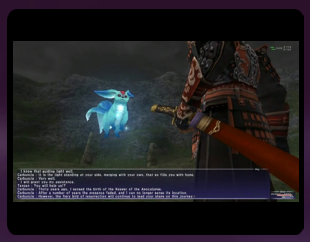
6.7

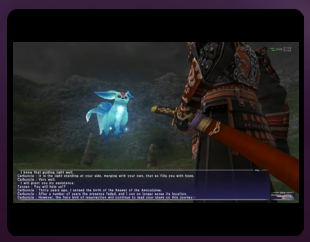


J









Seekers of Adoulin

Release date March 27, 2013

On the far western continent of Ulbuka, the Sacred City of Adoulin has recommenced the colonization of its hinterland and recruited adventurers from the Middle Lands to aid the pioneering effort. Ruled by the ferocious Naakuals, keepers of the wild, the uncharted region of Eastern Ulbuka is rife with treasure and mystery. What dark secrets will the adventurer uncover while breaking new ground in this primeval land?

Final Fantasy XI: Seekers of Adoulin is the fifth full expansion pack for Final Fantasy XI, and the first full expansion for Final Fantasy XI in over 5 years after Wings of the Goddess. Seekers of Adoulin is set in the western continent of Ulbuka and features new jobs, story, areas, quests and gameplay systems.

PlayStation 2 support for Seekers of Adoulin is only available in Japan.

New job classes include;

Geomancer: Harnessing the elemental energies that course through Vana'diel's veins in ways that no sorcerer can, geomancers both aid their comrades-in-arms and teach their foes how deadly the forces of nature can be.

Rune Fencer: Rune fencers are masters in the art of elemental runes. Quick with a blade as well as an incantation, these versatile duelists employ the power of arcane runes to sway the tide of battle both offensively and defensively.

Seekers of Adoulin introduces one new category of missions ("Seekers of Adoulin") and two new categories of quests. The first is for quests undertaken in Ulbuka, and the second is specifically for assignments that are taken up at the six coalitions in Adoulin.

Seekers of Adoulin explores the Primordial Continent of Ulbuka. The Sacred City of Adoulin serves as the hub in this region.

Seekers of Adoulin introduces new music for battles and areas in the new expansion. All new tracks are composed and arranged by Naoshi Mizuta.

Following in the tradition set by Chains of Promathia, a new track, "A New Direction", replaces "Vana'diel March" in the title screen. It reverts to the original title screen music after it fully plays once.

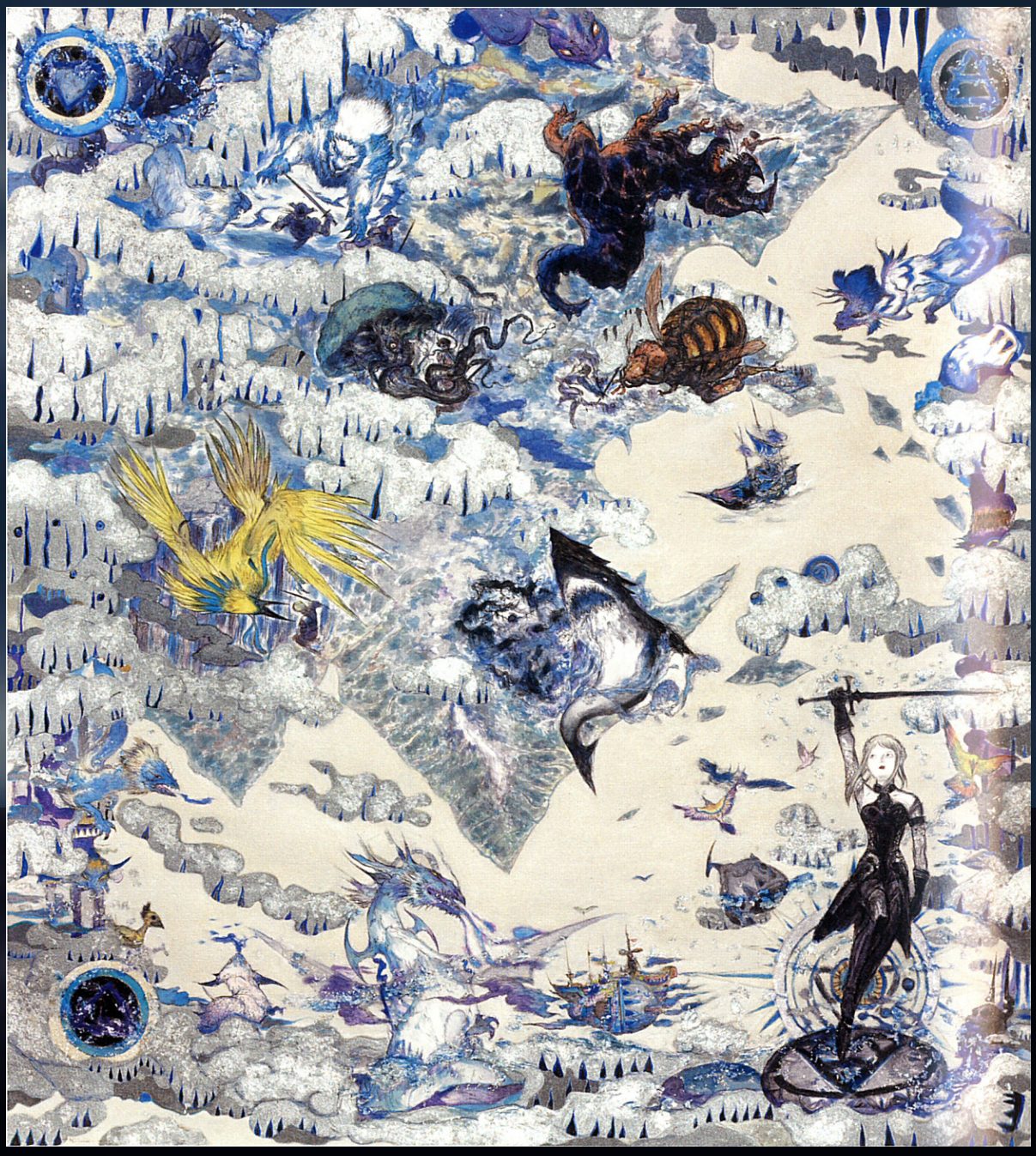
Unlike with previous expansions, Seekers of Adoulin utilizes only 1 new track for open world battles in the new areas. This track is used for solo and party battles, in both outdoor and dungeon areas.

"finalfantasy.wikia.com"

Rhapsodies of Vana'diel

Release date May 2015

Announced as part of a press conference, Rhapsodies of Vana'diel is the final main scenario, and serves to tie together fourteen years of Final Fantasy XI, billed as "the ultimate compilation of all we have accomplished to date, with major characters from throughout the game's history making appearances." The scenario consists of three separate chapters released for free, debuting in the May, August, and November 2015 version updates, respectively.



Final Fantasy XI received positive reviews from critics. GameRankings and Metacritic gave the game 85% based on 57 reviews and 85/100 based on 49 reviews. Famitsu rated the game 38 out of 40. Computer and Video Games Magazine noted that it was one of the most welcoming MMORPGs despite the cumbersome initial registration and setup. IGN called it a well done but unoriginal game and also noted that North American players were forced to play with already much more experienced Japanese players who had already completed the game's various quests. GameSpot criticized it at release for having an unconventional control system, a lengthy installation, and having no PvP aspects. Other elements receiving criticism include the EXP grind, which involves constant battles to access different parts of the game, and overcrowded camp sites. The expansions have been mostly positively received, with praise for the amount of content added, but increasing signs that the graphics of the game are becoming outdated. It has also been noted that this game is the first to move in a wildly different direction while remaining in the main numbering line, as opposed to the Tactics and Crystal Chronicles games which became their own side series.

The user base for the PlayStation 2 version was truncated initially because of limited sales of the PlayStation 2's hard drive and network adapters that were needed for the game. The Japanese release of Rise of the Zilart was the number one selling game when it debuted in 2003 with 90,000 copies sold in the first week. The Treasures of Aht Urhgan, released three years later, sold over 103,000 copies for the PlayStation 2 in Japan during 2006. For the April–September 2004 financial period, Square Enix saw online gaming, particularly Final Fantasy XI, sales increase by 101 percent and operating profit increase by 230.9 percent. Revenues held steady from subscription services in the summer of 2006; in the fall, however, Square acknowledged that online subscription revenues were "unsatisfactory", despite the steady performance of Final Fantasy XI. In December 2003, Square Enix president Yoichi Wada announced that there were over 200,000 subscribers to Final Fantasy XI, allowing the company to break even and start making a profit. There were between 200,000 and 300,000 active players daily in 2006. In June 2012, Square Enix president Yoichi Wada announced that Final Fantasy XI had become the most profitable title in the Final Fantasy series. While many MMOs have switched to some form of free-to-play, including World of Warcraft, the base monthly subscription price point for Final Fantasy XI has remained the same since its debut in 2002.

Final Fantasy XI was awarded the grand prize from the Japan's CESA for 2002–2003 along with Taiko no Tatsujin. It has also received GameSpy's 2003 PC MMORPG Game of the Year Award and IGN's Game of the Month for March 2004, citing the game's huge customization and its successful cross-platform and cross-language game world. Final Fantasy XI was referenced in the online game Minna no Golf Online in the form of a Final Fantasy XI-themed lobby. At 2009's Electronic Entertainment Expo, Square Enix revealed Final Fantasy XIV Online, which was Square Enix's next MMORPG.

FANTASTIC VIEW

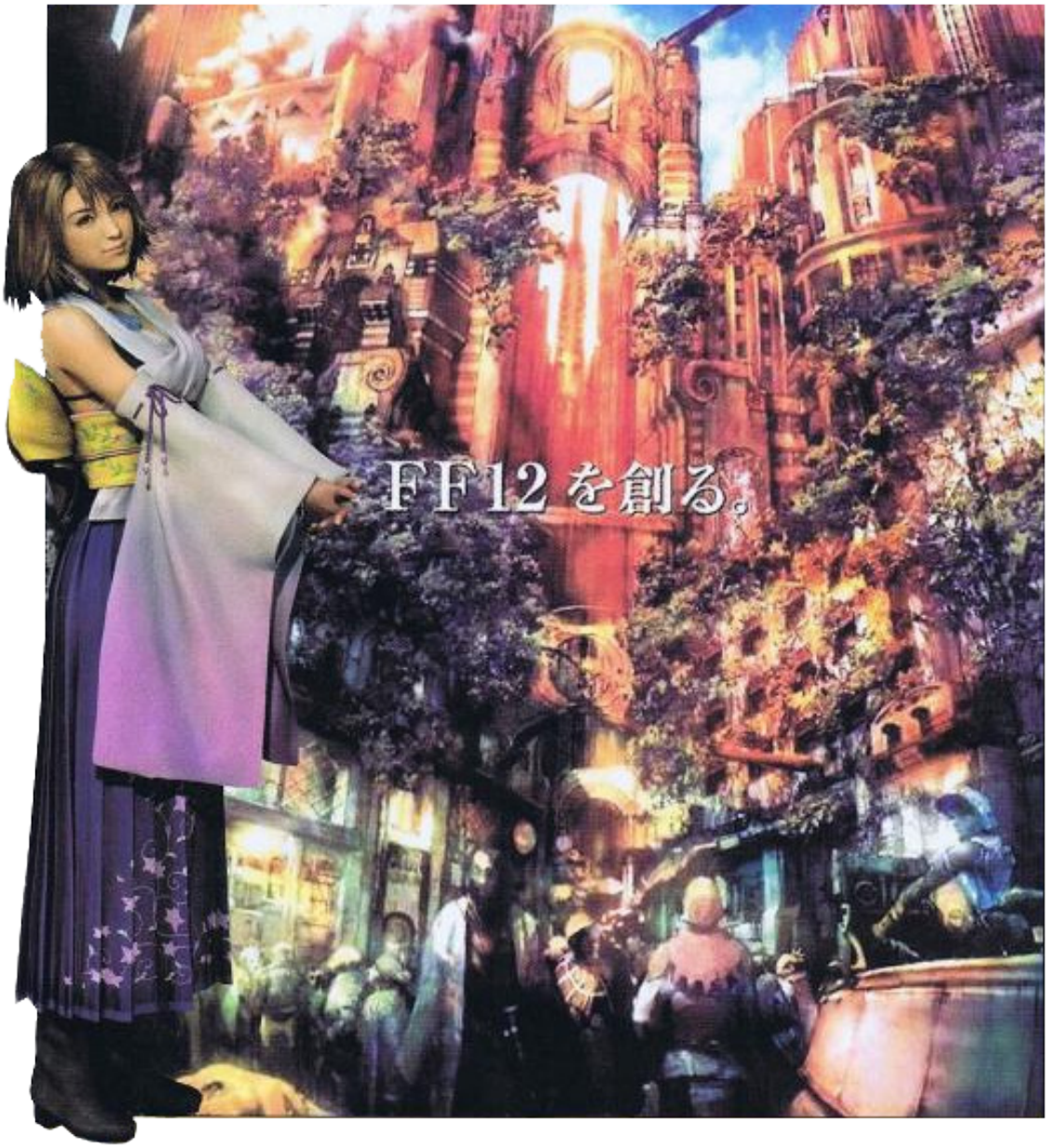
by: PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) 2003 April #13

Square asks,
"Can you *guess* what it is yet?"

WE ALWAYS KNEW that *Final Fantasy XII* was inevitable - it was just a question of time. While one team at Square is devotedly putting the finishing touches on *FFX-2* (the first 'proper' *Final Fantasy* sequel) before starting work on *FFX-3*, another group of Square stalwarts are firing up the dev kits and sharpening their crayons in anticipation of the twelfth episode of the *FF* saga.

So, what has the RPG giant produced so far? One, solitary poster to advertise that the game exists. And it's just like Square to tease us with a cryptic collage of imagery that bears resemblance to everything from the *Star Wars* planet of Naboo to *Blade Runner, The Fifth Element*, and an anime called *Metropolis*.

What will the finished game be like? That's like speculating when *Tomb Raider* is coming out - we haven't the foggiest. But we can reveal that a video of *FFXII* may appear on the disc of *FFX-2* when it's released in Japan this month.



FINAL FANTASY XII IS UNVEILED!

by: PSW (AU) #19

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ADVENTURE RETURNS TRAILING CLOUDS OF GLORY.

THE FIRST EVER IMAGES OF SQUARE'S NEW FINAL Fantasy title appeared last month, leaving us slack-jawed with stunned desire. The sprawling adventure marks a return to the series' roots after the massively multiplayer online action of *Final Fantasy XI*. You'll control a group of characters questing through a magical world, but this time it's not an entirely new one. The world of Ivalice has previously been used as the setting for *Final Fantasy Tactics* on PSone and, lately, Game Boy Advance.

Ashe and Vaan are the new stars, and unfeasebly huge monsters can once again be summoned to fight for you. Stylistically, the game seems to blend art deco design a la *Phantom Menace* with a sunny southern Mediterranean feel. Cloudbusting airships abound, and different languages are spoken in different countries. There's rumoured to be a much greater emphasis on social standing, with some creatures considered less posh than others. Fans of the series can breathe a sign of relief, because the giant Chocobo birds are still in here and the magical Moogle race are present as well. We've also heard rumours that developer Square has implemented a few graphical tricks which means PS2 can display even more detail than in the previous splendid looking games. Rather than going to the map screen, you'll zoom out to display the whole world around you. Japanese gamers can expect to play *Final Fantasy XII* in late winter, but we might not see this until the beginning of 2005.

Final Fantasy XII

9.2

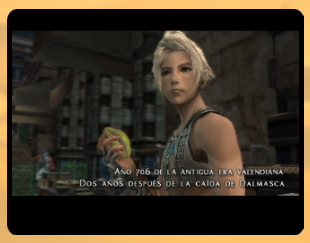
J N P

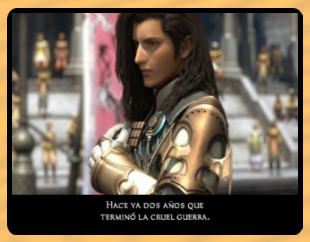
Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) March 14, 2006
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Released in 2006, it is the twelfth title in the mainline Final Fantasy series. The game introduced several innovations to the series: an open world, a seamless battle system, a controllable camera, a customizable "gambit" system, which lets the player control the AI of characters in battle, a "license" system, which determines what abilities and equipment can be used by characters, and a hunting side quest, which allows the player to find and defeat increasingly difficult monsters in the game's open world. Final Fantasy XII also includes elements from previous games in the series, such as Chocobos and Moogles.

The game takes place in the fictional land of Ivalice, where the empires of Archadia and Rozarria are waging an endless war. Dalmasca, a small kingdom, is caught between the warring nations. When Dalmasca is annexed by Archadia, its princess, Ashe, creates a resistance movement. During the struggle, she meets Vaan, a young adventurer who dreams of becoming a sky pirate in command of an airship. They are quickly joined by a band of allies; together, they rally against the tyranny of the Archadian Empire.

Throughout the game, the player controls the character from a third-person perspective to interact with people, objects, and enemies. Unlike previous games in the series, the player can also control the camera with the right analog stick, allowing for a 360° view of the surroundings. While in towns and cities, the player may only see from the perspective of Vaan, but any character may be controlled in the field. The world of Final Fantasy XII is rendered to scale relative to the characters in it; instead of a caricature of the character roaming around miniature terrain, as found in the earlier Final Fantasy games, every area is represented proportionally. The player navigates the overworld on foot, Chocobo, or by airship. Players may save their game to a memory card using save crystals or gate crystals, and may use the latter to teleport between gate crystals. An in-game bestiary provides incidental information about the world of Final Fantasy XII.





Final Fantasy XII restructures the system of earning gil, the currency of the Final Fantasy games; instead of gil, most enemies drop "loot" which can be sold at shops. This ties into a new battle mechanic which rewards the player with improved loot for slaying a particular type of enemy multiple times in a row. Selling different types of loot also unlocks a bazaar option in shops, which provides items at a lower cost, or items exclusive to the bazaar.

Excluding the MMORPG Final Fantasy XI, Final Fantasy XII is the first entry in the main Final Fantasy series not to include random encounters. Instead, enemies are visible in the overworld and the player may choose to fight or avoid them. Battles unfold in real time using the "Active Dimension Battle" (ADB) system. Battles begin when the party comes within range of an aggressive enemy, the party attacks an enemy, or a story event initiates a confrontation. When a character or enemy begins an action, target lines connect characters to other party members or enemies; different colors represent the different types of action. The player may swap to and issue commands to any of the three characters in the party, but guest characters are controlled by AI. Battle commands are initiated through a series of menus, and include Attack, Magicks, Technicks, Mist, Gambits, and Items. The player may switch any active character with an inactive character at any time, unless the active character is targeted by an attack or ability. Characters who are knocked out may also be substituted.

A new feature in Final Fantasy XII is the "gambit" system, which allows the player to program each character to perform certain commands in battle in response to specified conditions. Using gambits, the player may set reactions to different stimuli for each character. Each gambit consists of three parts: a target, an action, and a priority. The target specifies which ally or foe to act on and the condition for applying the action. For example, the target "Ally: HP < 70%" causes the character to target any ally whose hit points have fallen below 70%. The action is the command to be performed on the target. The priority determines which gambit to perform when multiple gambits are triggered. These heuristics guide the characters when acting autonomously, though player-directed commands are always given top priority.

In Final Fantasy XII, a mysterious phenomenon known as "Mist" is the key energy which allows characters to cast summoning magic and perform "Quickenings". After defeating an Esper in combat, the player will be able to summon it to the battlefield. Similar to Final Fantasy X, the summoned creatures become active participants in battle, as opposed to the cinematic attacks seen in previous games in the series. Unlike Final Fantasy X, however, Espers follow hidden gambits, rather than the player's direct command. The summoner remains an active member in the fight, able to attack and cast support magic, instead of leaving the party or standing idle while the summoned creature fights. An Esper will leave the battle if either the summoner or itself is knocked out, its time limit expires, or it executes its special attack. Some Espers have origins in Final Fantasy Tactics and Final Fantasy Tactics Advance and others are derived from the final bosses of previous Final Fantasy games such as Chaos, the final boss of the first Final Fantasy, and Zeromus, the final boss of Final Fantasy IV.

Final Fantasy XII introduces "Quickenings", a new Limit Break system unique compared to those in previous games in the series.

Characters learn Quickenings by progressing to specific panels on the License Board. Each character can learn three Quickenings, which are unique to that character. Characters may string together Quickenings into large combo attacks, called Mist Chains, via timed button presses. If a Mist Chain reaches a certain length, a final strike will be initiated at the end of the Quickening cycle, called a Concurrence.

As in many RPGs, characters "level up" each time they earn a set number of experience points from defeating enemies; each level gained increases the character's statistics and improves performance in battle. Statistics include hit points, the amount of damage a character can receive; strength, the power of the character's physical attacks; and magic, the potency of the character's magical spells.

In addition to leveling up, players may improve their characters via the License Board. The License Board is an array of panels that contain "licenses" which allow a character to perform certain actions. The board is split into two parts; the upper part comprises Magick, Technick, Accessory, and Augment (stat increases and other permanent buffs) licenses, and the bottom part comprises mostly Weapon and Armor licenses.

To use a Magick, Technick, or piece of equipment, the character must obtain its corresponding license by spending the required amount of LP (License Points). LP are earned in battle along with the experience points. Like the Sphere Grid in Final Fantasy X, all characters may obtain all licenses on the board; however, each Quickening and Esper license may only be activated by a single character.

Development for Final Fantasy XII began in December 2000 and was headed by Final Fantasy Tactics director Yasumi Matsuno and Final Fantasy IX director Hiroyuki Ito. Matsuno provided the original concept and plot but was forced to bow out of his roles midway through production due to health concerns. The team was restructured as a consequence: the new directorial duo consisted of Ito and Hiroshi Minagawa, while Akitoshi Kawazu of SaGa series fame became the game's executive producer. Series creator Hironobu Sakaguchi was disappointed by Matsuno's departure and declined to play the game beyond its introduction.

The desire to move away from random encounters was present since the beginning of development. This desire fueled the development of the Active Dimension Battle system so players could seamlessly move from battle to exploration. The gambit system was conceived early on as a way to facilitate this change. Battle system designer Hiroshi Tomomatsu states that it gradually moved away from a complex and rigid formula to the more flexible form seen in the final version of the game. Ito drew inspiration for gambits from plays in American football where each team member has a specific job to do based on the conditions and desired outcome. As for the license system, he explained that needing "licenses" to perform certain actions was a natural extension of the rigid structured society of Archadia, as epitomized by its Judges.

At the early stages of development, Minagawa revealed that numerous ideas and features were planned for the game, but were dropped from the final stages due to certain constraints and hardware limitations. Some of these included the ability for a second player to join in the gameplay, enabling a two-player mode. Another idea that was given a considerable amount of thought was the ability to recruit non-player characters to join in the mob hunts. Due to the technical limitations of the console and multiple

number of characters joining the fray, the development phase took longer than expected, causing delays.

Design inspiration came from a mix of medieval Mediterranean countries as demonstrated by the architectural styles found throughout Ivalice along with many of the races populating the region. The art team, led by art directors Hideo Minaba and Isamu Kamikokuryō, visited Turkey, which influenced the game's Mediterranean-style setting. The developers also used styles and deco from other sources including areas in India and New York City. Of note is the use of Sanskrit in the city of Bhujerba. Phrases such as "svagatam" (welcome) and titles like "parijanah" (guide) are lifted directly from Sanskrit. Minaba mentions that the team tried to bring out Arabic culture in the design of the game. War is a prominent theme of the game and the developers stated that the cutscene battles are influenced by Ancient Rome. When asked to comment on the fan observation of Star Wars similarities, Minaba replied that although he was a fan of the series, it was not necessarily an influence to the game's designs. It has also been noted that the similarities originate from The Hidden Fortress, the 1958 Akira Kurosawa film that inspired Star Wars.

Basch was initially meant to be the main protagonist of the story, but the focus was eventually shifted to Vaan and Penelo when the two characters were created later in development. The development team explained that their previous game, Vagrant Story, which featured a *"strong man in his prime"* as the protagonist had been unsuccessful and unpopular; the change regarding Final Fantasy XII from a *"big and tough"* protagonist to a younger, youthful one was thus decided after targeting demographics were considered. With the casting of actor Kouhei Takeda for the voice acting and motion capture, Vaan became

feature a prominent role in the game, which was influenced by an interest in history among the developers.

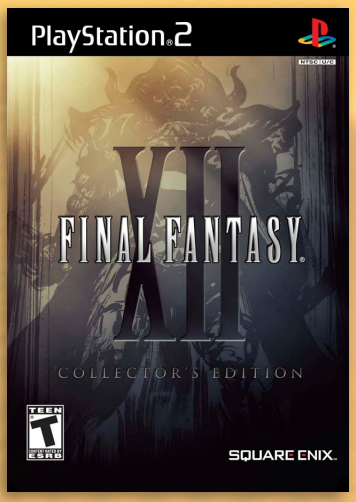
Miwa Shoda wrote a storyline for the game premised on the basis of the cutscenes and world setting that had already been finished when she joined the team. Scenario writer Daisuke Watanabe in turn fleshed out Shoda's plot into a script. During the English localization process, Alexander O. Smith, who had previously worked on Vagrant Story and Final Fantasy X, acted as producer and translator. While still preserving the meaning behind the Japanese script, Smith made the decision to use different dialects of English to reproduce the regional differences in pronunciation found in the Japanese version. He also tried to distance the game from the *"flat reads"* found in other dubbed work by casting voice actors who had experience in theatre work. In terms of general changes, the localization team introduced widescreen 16:9 ratio support and reinserted scenes that were left out of the original Japanese version for political reasons and to preserve an "All Ages" CERO rating.

Final Fantasy XII once held the Guinness World Record for longest development period in a video game production, with a total of five years, spanning from 2001 until its release in 2006. At a Final Fantasy XII "postmortem" at MIT in March 2009, Hiroshi Minagawa mentioned that several years of production were devoted to the creation of custom tools used for the development of the game. It was also listed as 8th on the Guinness top 50 games of all time in 2009.

Hitoshi Sakimoto composed and arranged most of the game's soundtrack, with Hayato Matsuo and Masaharu Iwata creating seven and two tracks respectively. Nobuo Uematsu, following his departure from Square Enix in 2004, only contributed the ending song, "Kiss Me Goodbye". Sakimoto experienced difficulty

following in Uematsu's footsteps, but he decided to create a unique soundtrack in his own way. "Kiss Me Good-Bye" was performed in both English and Japanese by Angela Aki. Aki's style of playing the keyboard while singing reminded Uematsu of his childhood idol, Elton John, which was one of the reasons he chose her. The English version of the song was featured in both the Japanese and North American versions of the game. In addition to the theme song, violinist Taro Hakase co-composed, arranged, and performed the game's ending credits theme, Symphonic Poem "Hope", along with Yuji Toriyama.

On March 16, 2006, SCEJ released a special Final Fantasy XII package, which contained a PlayStation 2 game system, the Final Fantasy XII game, a standard DualShock controller, and a vertical console stand. The Japanese third-party manufacturer Hori also released Final Fantasy XII memory cards on the day of the game's release; stickers of Final Fantasy XII characters are included. Game peripheral maker Logicool (Logitech's Japanese branch) released a special edition Final Fantasy XII controller alongside the title. Suntory produced "Final Fantasy XII Potion"—a drink containing such ingredients as royal jelly, chamomile, sage, thyme, and marjoram. Suntory also released a Final Fantasy XII Premium Box, which came with a Final Fantasy XII collector's card. The Potion was a limited edition product and is no longer available. Final Fantasy XII was also adapted into a manga by Gin Amou. Square Enix published the series in a total of five tankōbon volumes from December 22, 2006 to August 22, 2009.



For the North American release, a "Collector's Edition" was available through GameStop and EB Games. This edition includes the original game packaged in a metallic case along with a special bonus disc, which contains Final Fantasy XII developer interviews, an art gallery, U.S. and Japanese trailers, and a featurette entitled "History of Final Fantasy", which gives a brief overview of most released and upcoming Final Fantasy games. On January 26, 2007, Square Enix Product Blog revealed full-color Gabranth, Ashe, Balthier, and Vaan figures.

An international version of the game, Final Fantasy XII International Zodiac Job System, was released in Japan on August 10, 2007. It includes twelve license boards (instead of the original game's one), each corresponding to a different Zodiac sign and job. The player can control guest characters and summons, and hold L1 to double the game's running speed. There is also a "New Game+" option, a "New Game- (minus)" option (in which characters do not gain experience), and a "Trial Mode" in which the player hunts monsters in 100 different maps to gain items and money. The game also includes the western version's English voices and widescreen 16:9 support, and a bonus DVD.

In July 2017, Square Enix released Final Fantasy XII: The Zodiac Age, a high-definition remaster of the Japanese-only International Zodiac Job System for the PlayStation 4. It adds trophy support, a remastered soundtrack with a few new tracks, and improved technical performance. The Zodiac Age was nominated for "Best Remake/Remaster" at IGN's Best of 2017 Awards, and won "Best Remaster" at Game Informer's Best of 2017 Awards and 2017 RPG of the Year Awards. The remaster also received favorable reviews.

A version for Windows was released via Steam on February 1, 2018. The port included support for higher display resolutions and 60 frames-per-second rendering, options to switch between three different versions of the soundtrack, and immediate access to the post-game modes.

Final Fantasy XII sold more than 1,764,000 copies in its first week in Japan, almost equaling the sales of Final Fantasy X in its first week. A Square Enix conference report stated that Final Fantasy XII sold more than 2.38 million copies in Japan in the two weeks since its March 16, 2006 release. In North America, Final Fantasy XII shipped approximately 1.5 million copies in its first week. It was the fourth best-selling PlayStation 2 game of 2006 worldwide. As of March 2007, the game had shipped over 5.2 million copies worldwide. By November 2009, over 6 million copies of the game were sold worldwide.

According to Metacritic, Final Fantasy XII received "universal acclaim". On March 16, 2006, it became the sixth game to receive a perfect score from the Japanese gaming magazine Famitsu, making it the first Final Fantasy game, first Hiroyuki Ito game, and only PlayStation 2 title to do so. It is also the second Yasumi Matsuno title to garner a perfect score, the first being Vagrant Story. The game was praised for its graphics, scenarios, game system, and the freshness it brought to the Final Fantasy series. It was praised for its seamless transitions between full motion video segments and the in-game engine, and was voted number one for Best Art Style on IGN's weekly Top Ten. Newtype USA named Final Fantasy XII its "Game of the Month" for November 2006, praised the gameplay, graphics, and story, and called it *"the best RPG to have been released for any Sony platform"*.

Although GameSpot lauded the gambit and license systems as an innovative and in-depth way for the player to control the characters, it criticized them for being too complicated and difficult to adjust to, especially for newer players of the series. The reviewer also criticized the sometimes tedious back and forth travel. On the other hand, GameSpot took particular note of the *"excellent"* voice cast. IGN praised the game's rich storyline and artistic direction, shown through its *"sheer depth of character"*. It also assuaged criticism that the gambit system would *"let the game play itself"*, countering that gambits do not function without a player. However, IGN wrote that while *"still extremely strong"*, Final Fantasy XII has one of the series' weaker soundtracks.

Executive producer Akitoshi Kawazu was pleased by Famitsu's rating but admitted that he thought the game was not perfect; he felt that the storyline did not meet some fans' expectations. Kawazu expressed his frustration and regrets regarding the storyline, citing creative differences between the PlayOnline and Final Fantasy Tactics members of the development team.

Final Fantasy XII was named best PlayStation 2 game and best RPG by numerous video game journals and websites, including GameSpot, GameSpy and IGN. Both Edge and Famitsu awarded it Game of the Year 2006. The Japan Game Awards 2006 honored Final Fantasy XII with their "Grand Award" and "Award for Excellence" and the PlayStation Awards 2006 bestowed the "Double Platinum Prize". It was selected for the list "Top 100 New Japanese Styles", a list of *"products and services originating in Japan to serve as a mark of excellence"*. Final Fantasy XII also received nominations in such categories as best RPG, story, art direction, character design and original musical score at the Interactive Achievement Awards, Game Developers Choice Awards, BAFTA Video Games Awards, Spike Video Game Awards, and the Satellite Awards.

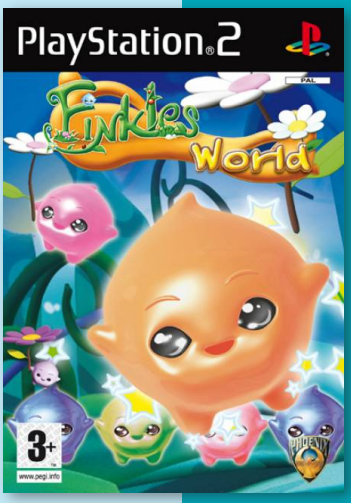
Finkles World

P

Developer	CyberPlanet
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) December, 2007
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1 Player

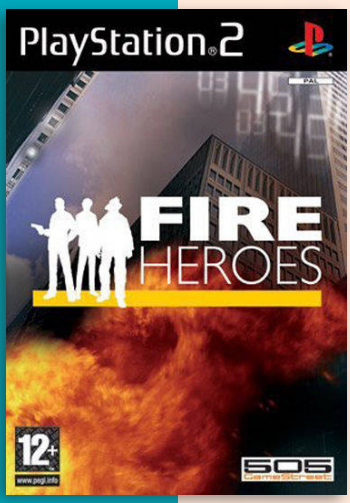
Finkles World is a puzzle game that features 3 game modes: Classic, Puzzle & Collect Color. In the game, players have to join 3 or more creatures of the same colour to make them dissapear. If the upper bar reach zero it will be game over.

The game includes more than 30 level stages.



Fire Heroes

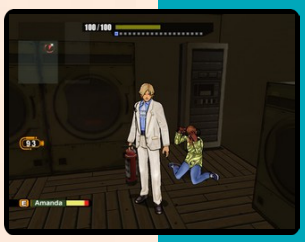
7.7



Developer	Spike
Publisher	Spike, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) October 28, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Fire Heroes, known as Hard Luck: Return of the heroes in Japan, is a firefighting game set in Clayton Tower, a new, nearly complete 30 story sky scraper that houses a shopping mall on its bottom floors. A fire breaks out in the tower as the tower's owners and clients hold a Christmas party. The players goal is to find and rescue victims of the fire.

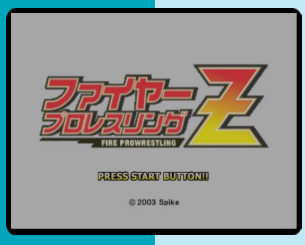
"psxdatacenter.com"



J P

Fire ProWrestling Z

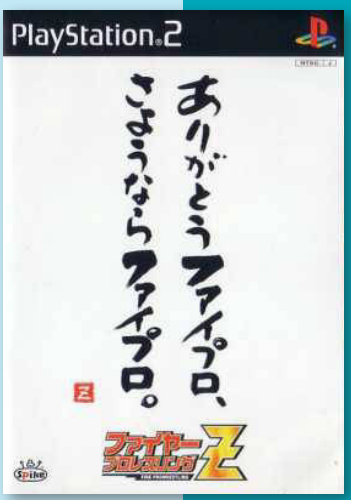
7.7



J

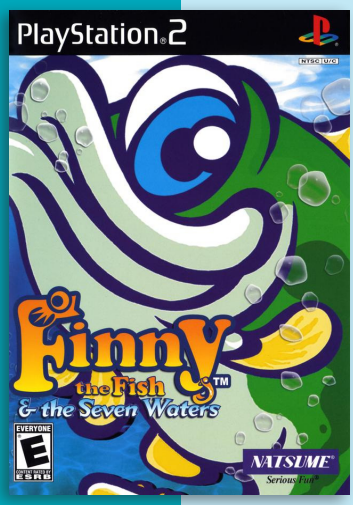
Developer	Spike
Publisher	Spike
Release date	(jp) June 5, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Fire ProWrestling Z is the direct follow-up to Fire Pro Wrestling D, intended as the series' swan song and final entry, though it would return just two years later. The game itself plays essentially the same as its predecessor, isometric sprite-based, timing-centric gameplay intact. The key distinguishing feature is the addition of even more wrestlers, custom parts, and moves - nearly 1500 moves are available in the creation mode.



Finny the Fish & the Seven Waters

5.9



Developer	SCEI
Publisher	SCEI, (us) Natsume
Release date	(jp) July 15, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

After an earthquake shakes Finny's home stream, Finny lead by Kappa, the protector of Finny's home, must travel throughout the vast seas in order to meet the Masters and collect their statues.

One of the most important parts of the game is the hunger meter. Finny must eat fish in order to survive, or else his hunger meter will deplete and he will gradually lose health. He can also eat fish that are larger than him by biting it a certain amount of time. However, he cannot eat lures. In order to escape from fishing humans, he must either break the fishing line or jump out of the water to unhook himself. He'll also need to avoid other dangers such as alligators and electric eels.

Other than that, this game has many puzzles to be solved and people to help.

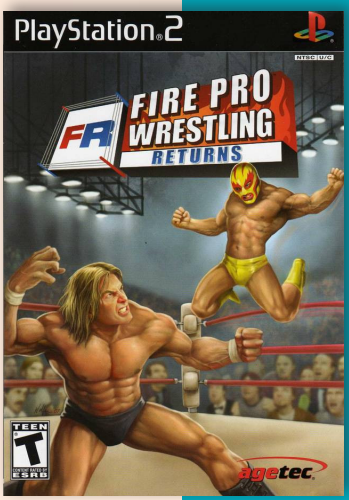
"mobygames.com"

Fire Pro Wrestling Returns

7.8

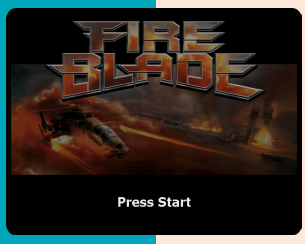
Developer	S-Neo
Publisher	Spike, (us) Agetec, SCEA, (eu) 505 Games
Release date	(jp) September 15, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

Fire Pro Wrestling Returns is a part of the Fire Pro Wrestling series. Like other titles in the Fire Pro Wrestling series, Fire Pro Wrestling Returns distinguishes itself from other wrestling games by focusing on timing and strategy, as opposed to button-mashing. Fire Pro Wrestling Returns offers a roster of 327 wrestlers from a variety of real-life wrestling companies. Players can create custom characters, wrestling rings, belts, promotions, and referees. Returns supplies new customizing tools, such as a "Face Layer" feature that allows players to create a wrestler's face using multiple objects. Game modes include a traditional cage match, Exploding Barbed Wire Deathmatch, and Match Maker mode, wherein the player must book shows and try to get a good grade on the shows based on crowd reaction.



Fireblade

6.4



N P

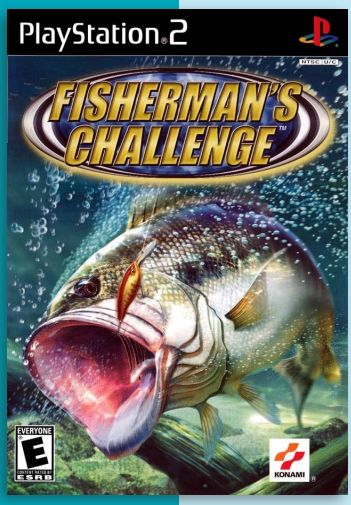
Developer	Kuju Entertainment
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) June 16, 2002
Genre	Simulation, Action
Mode	1 Player

The player is part of the elite anti-terrorist force, Fireblade, who has been mobilized to take care of a dangerous terrorist group known as "United Eastern States", who are plotting to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Piloting the a attack helicopter through various missions, players must take out a range of enemy units, from military bases to other attack craft (both air and ground based).

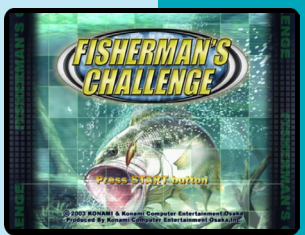
Fisherman's Challenge

6.7



Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) January 19, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

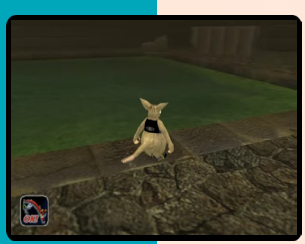
Fisherman's Challenge, sequel to Fisherman's Bait: A Bass Challenge for the PlayStation, features five different lakes, each free-roaming and with seven different types of fish to catch. There are a 110 different lures to choose from as well as 100 different rod and reel combinations to choose from. To catch fish the players must hit certain buttons when prompted in order to keep the fish hooked.



N P

Fishing Fantasy: BuzzRod

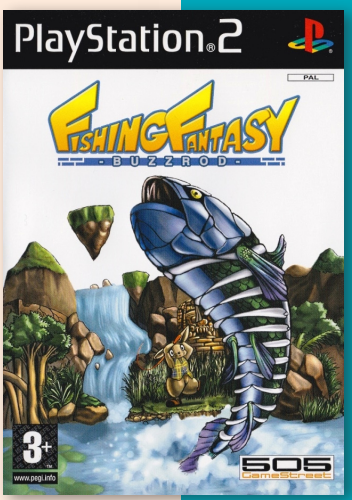
7.3



J P

Developer	Starfish
Publisher	Starfish, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) January 6, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 Player

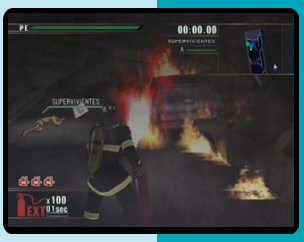
BuzzRod Fishing Fantasy combines action-based fishing with roleplaying game elements. Players combine bait for different effects and can equip the rod with items to better lure in the desired fish. Once "Hit" appears on the screen, they've got to reel in the fish, tilting the rod in accordance with on-screen icons.

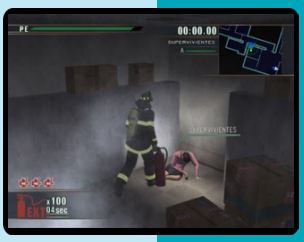


Firefighter F.D. 18

6.3

Developer	KCET
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) February 26, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player





Firefighter F.D.18 revolves around Dean McGregor, a highly skilled firefighter. The plot is supposedly taken from the 1991 film, Backdraft, and this is backed by the fact that many similarities can be found, such as the locations of the fires, the company number, and the cinematic sequences.

In the game, players become firefighters. Their goal is to clear areas where fire has broken out and rescue civilians and fight fire "bosses" at the end. Players have an axe, a fire hose, and a fire extinguisher to break down doors and put out fires as they rescue survivors. Stages are timed. Obstacles, such as falling beams, and chemicals, hinder progress and must be cleared before the player can progress further.

There are several stages. They are an underground tunnel, a computer research facility, a ship, and a chemical plant.

J N P

First Kiss * Monogatari I & II

6.8

J

Developer	M2
Publisher	Broccoli
Release date	(jp) July 17, 2003
Genre	Compilation, Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

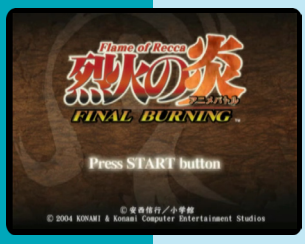
This compilation includes two games ported from Dreamcast: First Kiss * Monogatari I and First Kiss * Monogatari 2. Both games are integrated together and are run from the main menu. This is also the only release of either of the two games for PlayStation 2 platform.

First Kiss Story has the player assume the role of a high school boy, whose parents left town one month before his graduation. So during this month, he will live by his parent's friends, the Orikura family, which consists of two sisters, Kana and Manami, and their mother, a young widow.

In the second game, the player have to join his father in the family business. To escape his familial obligations, the young man runs away and settles in Amagi City located in Fukuoka Prefecture where he grew up.

Flame of Recca: Final Burning

6.8



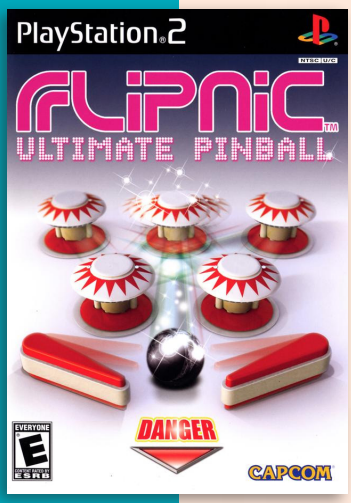
J

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) June 10, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

Flame of Recca: Final Burning, based on the anime series of the same name, is best described as an interactive anime. The game utilizes a split-screen format wherein players must press different button combinations to make their selected character perform specific moves. Certain cut-scenes require the player to determine what the selected character will do next through choosing from a given set of options.

Flipnic: Ultimate Pinball

6.4



Developer	SCEI
Publisher	SCEI, (eu) Ubisoft, (us) Capcom
Release date	(jp) August 7, 2003
Genre	Pinball
Mode	1-2 Players

Flipnic is a psychedelic pinball game. The game features multiple tables in which players must complete a given set of tasks before they can proceed to the next level. Each of the "tables" consists of many smaller playing areas and every one has some gimmick in them. For example, one must first freeze the waterfall and then destroy the ice and climb a mountain behind it. All this using only the paddles and the ball.

J N P

Flying Circus

5.6

J

Developer	Syscom
Publisher	Syscom
Release date	(jp) November 15, 2001
Genre	Simulation
Mode	1 Player

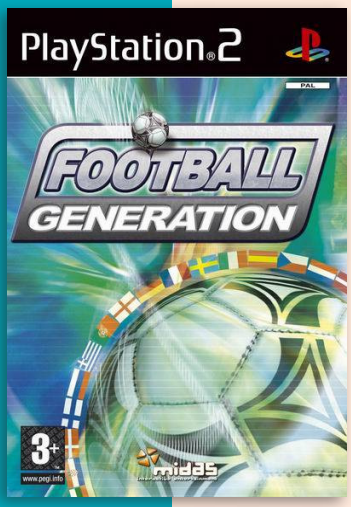
Players pilot a radio-controlled helicopter through various missions and scenarios in this RC flight simulator. A special "hobby controller" is included to guide the helicopter through it's paces on-screen. Game modes include; Adventure, License, Free flight, Challenge and Maintenance.

The Prop Pack version comes with a Special Flying Circus RC Dual-stick Controller.

"psxdatacenter.com"

Football Generation

6.3



Developer	Trecision
Publisher	Midas Interactive Entertainment
Release date	(eu) November 10, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

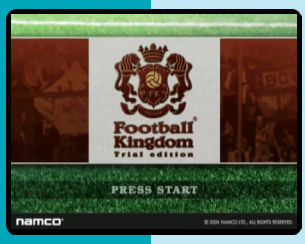
Football Generation features 44 international and 33 major club teams from across the globe. The players' names are not licensed, but the game has a wide array of game modes.

Using Criteron's Renderware engine and Firelight's FMOD sound engine, Football Generation contains detailed stadiums, 3D players, four camera angles, realistic weather effects and various replay modes.

P

Football Kingdom: Touring Edition

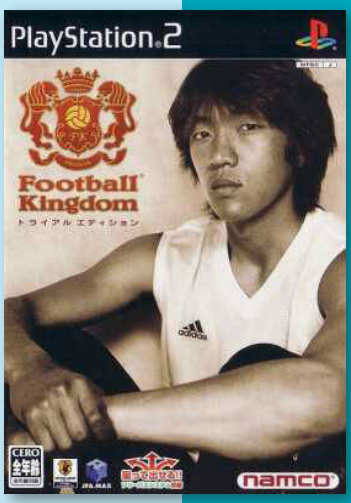
8.0



J

Developer	Namco
Publisher	Namco
Release date	(jp) May 27, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-8 Players

Football Kingdom is a soccer game designed for greater realism and freedom of control compared to contemporary franchises such as Winning Eleven or FIFA. The game's key distinction is its highly detailed and nuanced control system which allows for an exceptionally wide range of control over actions like passing, dribbling and running, kicks, feints, and even goalkeeping.



For Symphony: With All One's Heart

4.0

Developer	Takuyo
Publisher	Takuyo
Release date	(jp) May 26, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Originally released for Dreamcast, the PS2 release features additional updates which include full voice-acting, renewed videos and art, new CG events and 2 new characters.

The game story, unlike in many visual novels and love simulations, let players select a male or female student to play as.

J

FlatOut

7.0

J N P

Developer	Bugbear
Publisher	Empire Interactive, (jp) Konami
Release date	(eu) November 5, 2004
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-6 Players

FlatOut is a racing game developed by the Finnish developer Bugbear Entertainment. Gameplay in FlatOut places emphasis on demolition derby-style races, and features a sophisticated physics engine. 16 different cars are included, each with 5 different skins for them. The game is most known for car drivers flying through the windshield.

Modes in FlatOut include standard lap races, in either open environments or stadium laps, and demolition derby deathmatches, in which the driver of the sole-surviving vehicle declared the winner; both modes pit players against 7 computer-controlled opponents. The game also includes special events which require players to toss the driver off of their vehicle and meet certain requirements. In career mode, pick up the future top racer from the junkyard. Winnings come in the form of cash, which allows players to purchase vehicle upgrades and new vehicles.

FlatOut is noted for its extensive use of physics in vehicle damage and collisions; dents on vehicles may vary based on the type of accident, object and angle of impact (falling objects, for example, will damage mostly the upper areas of a car), while many roadside items react better to collisions from other vehicles.

Ragdoll physics is also present in the game, with drivers capable of being tossed out of their car after high-impact crashes. This feature is extensively used in several special events, when the player is required to "toss" a driver to a specific distance, height, or target.

The game received "average" reviews on all platforms according to Metacritic. In Japan, Famitsu gave the game a score of all four sevens for a total of 28 out of 40.

The Sydney Morning Herald gave the game a score of four-and-a-half stars out of five and stated, *"The handling is remarkable, and the fact the tracks are littered with obstacles that bounce and crash realistically makes it all the more fun. Throw in excellent damage modelling and it's plain to see that this game has nailed the core mechanics of an addictive racer perfectly."*

FlatOut 2

7.3

Developer	Bugbear
Publisher	Empire Interactive, (us) Vivendi Games, (jp) Konami
Release date	(eu) June 30, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-8 Players

FlatOut 2 is the sequel to the 2004 game FlatOut. The game is themed more on the street racing/import tuner scene than its predecessor. A notable change is the tire grip; players can take more control of their car, worrying less about skidding in tight turns. The game has three car classes: derby, race, and street.

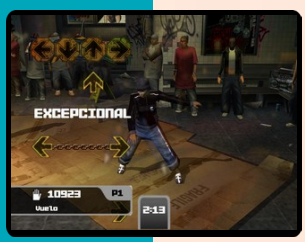
The ragdoll physics in the sequel have been greatly updated. During the race, the driver may be thrown out of the car if slammed into a wall at a high speed. In the numerous Stunt minigames the goal is to shoot the driver out of the car and complete objectives like knocking down a set of bowling pins, hitting the designated spots on a dartboard, score a field goal or fly through flaming hoops.

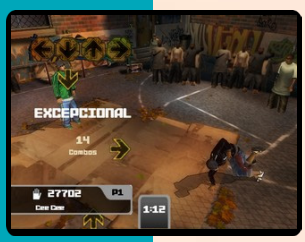
The PC version received "generally favorable reviews", while the PS2 versions received "average" reviews, according to Metacritic.

J N P

Flow: Urban Dance Uprising

6.5





N P

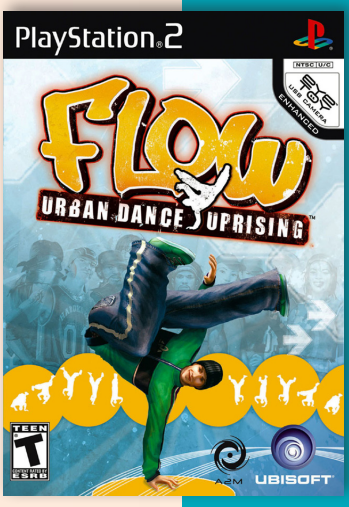
Developer	Artificial Mind and Movement
Publisher	Ubisoft
Release date	(us) November 15, 2005
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

FLOW: Urban Dance Uprising is a dance game similar to Konami's Dance Dance Revolution series. Instead of being focused on J-Pop and other licensed tracks, the game is focused on hip-hop and urban culture. The game features fifty different songs from classic hip-hop artists such as The Sugarhill Gang and Kurtis Blow.

The point of the game is to clear several songs by pressing buttons on either a compatible dance pad or on the game pad. Players performance will affect the final score and any unlockable bonuses.

There are several unlockable features in the game, including more songs, characters, costumes and game locations. The game also supports the EyeToy accessory, so players can see themselves on the screen as they dance with the game.

"mobygames.com"

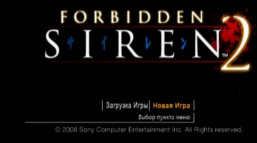


PlayStation 2
THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOUR EYES DON'T WANT TO SEE.
Dense fog creeps across an abandoned island, a siren sounds and the sea turns a deathly shade of red. Murderous demons have sensed your presence. To uncover the mysteries of this sinister island you will need to use Sight-jacking; an ability that allows you to see through your enemies' eyes. As these demons hunt you down, do you face the horror of your own death or outwit your enemies and bring the nightmare to an end? You decide.
MA 15+ RESTRICTED Strong violence
forbiddensiren2.com
FORBIDDEN SIREN 2

© 2006 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "PS" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. Forbidden Siren is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. SPS17/69/DPSM

Forbidden Siren 2

8.1



Developer	SCE Japan Studio
Publisher	SCEI, (eu, au) SCEE, (kO) SCE Korea
Release date	(jp) February 9, 2006
Genre	Survival horror, Stealth
Mode	1 Player

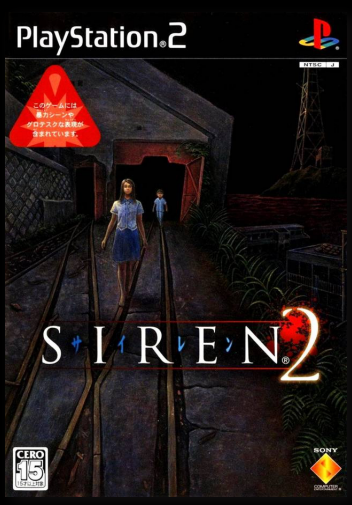
Forbidden Siren 2, known in Japan as Siren 2 is a sequel to 2003's Siren (Forbidden Siren). A film inspired by the game but featuring different plot and characters, Siren, was released that same year.

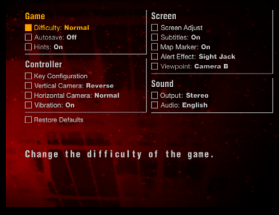
The game tells the story of several characters who become trapped on Yamijima Island, off the coast of mainland Japan. In 1976, during a blackout, the entire population of the island disappeared without trace or explanation. Twenty-nine years later, in 2005, a journalist is visiting the island to conduct research for an article when the ferry he and a small group of other passengers are on capsizes. Shortly after this, a group of soldiers crash land on the island. The game is played from the perspective of these characters, and out of chronological order, as the protagonists attempt to survive the island's monsters and discover its mystery.

The sequel adds new features in the game, which most notably players will notice, apart from the original Shibito zombies, as the new Yami Bito demons. The sequel also has a new alert system which functions through the controller's vibration function and alerts players of any nearby danger.

Stealth plays an important role, as well as light and darkness, as the creatures are sensitive to it in different ways. Just like in the previous game, players can sight-jack enemies and animals, to view the environment through their eyes. There are over 30 weapons to collect and there are three difficulty options.

Forbidden Siren 2 received "average" reviews according Metacritic. Eurogamer's Kristan Reed said that the game improved on many of the problems of the predecessor (especially the difficulty level and trial-and-error nature of the gameplay), but simultaneously fell somewhat short of the original. VideoGamer.com's Chris Pickering (a fan of Siren) also said that the game removed many of the problems inherent to the original but, at the same time, also fell somewhat short in many respects. In Japan, Famitsu gave it a score of 35 out of 40.





5.0

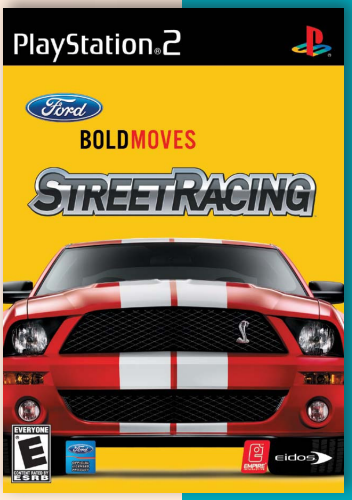
Ford Bold Moves Street Racing

N P

Developer	Razorworks
Publisher	Empire Interactive, (us) Eidos, (au) Xplosiv
Release date	(eu) February 24, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Ford Street Racing is a game commissioned by Ford for the Xbox, PC, PS2 and PSP. The game was sold as Ford Street Racing on the PC while the various console releases were given region specific names.

The game have 18 cars, while the Australian XR Edition swapped 3 standard cars for 3 iconic Australian market Falcons. The game features team and solo championship modes as well as an "Arcade" mode. Team mode allows the player to toggle between the cars in the player's team during the race; cars that are not being driven by the player are driven by the game's AI until the player selects it. The player has to play and win various championships to unlock new tracks, new vehicles and unlock new tournaments to earn cash to purchase those newly unlocked vehicles and/or repair the ones that are currently owned. These unlocked cars, tracks, and race types can be raced, without consequence in the Solo Racing and Team Racing. Notable cars featured in the game include Ford Mustang Boss 302, Ford RS200, Ford GT, Ford Lightning and the Ford Mustang SVT Cobra. vThe PS2 and PSP versions received mixed reviews, and the PC and Xbox versions received generally unfavorable reviews.



5.1

Ford Racing 2

N P

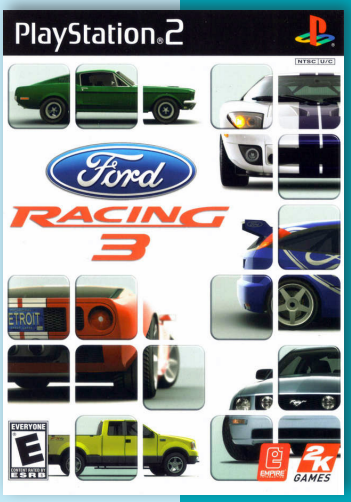
Developer	Razorworks
Publisher	Empire Interactive, (us) Gotham Games
Release date	(us) October 28, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Ford Racing 2, the sequel to Ford Racing on PlayStation, features two game modes: the Ford Challenge and the Ford Collection. The Ford Challenge contains approximately 30 challenges for the player, including head-to-head racing and time-limit racing. The Ford Collection allows the player to create customizable challenges. The player progresses through the Ford Challenge by winning races, which also unlocks new items and locations for the Ford Collection.

Ford Racing 3

5.0

Developer	Razorworks
Publisher	Take-Two Interactive, (us) 2K Games
Release date	(eu) October 29, 2004
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

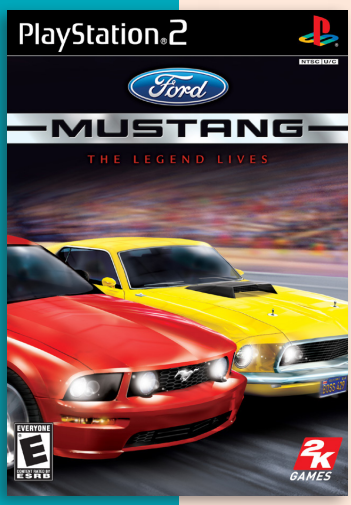


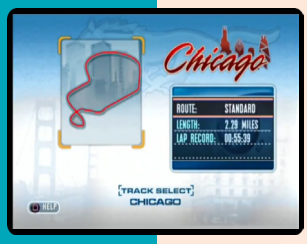
Ford Racing 3 feature 55 Ford vehicles. It includes the Ford Competition and Ford Challenge modes. Ford Competition, a single-player mode, consists of 14 tournaments, each one made up of races using only certain types of vehicles. Ford Challenge consists of various race events in which certain challenges must be completed to progress to the next event. Four challenges exist for each vehicle class, with an easy, medium, and hard difficulty setting for each challenge. Additionally, the game features the Ford Collection mode, in which the player designs custom challenges by selecting a track, conditions, and vehicles.

On Metacritic, the game have a score of 50 and 58 respectively, each indicating “Mixed or average reviews,”

Ford Mustang - The Legend Lives

5.8





Developer	Razorworks
Publisher	Take-Two Interactive, (us) 2K Games
Release date	(us) April 19, 2005
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

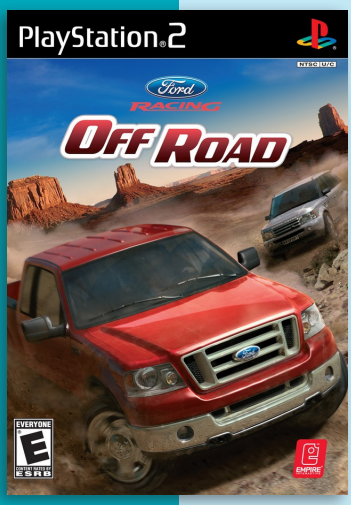
Ford Mustang: The Legend Lives is part of the Ford Racing series, following Ford Racing 3.

The game features 40 playable Ford Mustang vehicles, including production, concept, and racing models, ranging from 1964 to 2005. The game includes 22 race tracks set across seven U.S. cities, including Chicago, Miami, New York City, and San Francisco.

The game has three single-player modes: Career, Arcade, and Challenge. In Career mode, the player creates a custom Ford Mustang with which to race against others. For winning races, the player receives money that can be used to upgrade parts of the vehicle. Arcade mode features various races, most of which are time challenges. In Challenge mode, the player competes against other drivers in various racing events. The game also features several two-player modes.

Ford Racing: Off Road

3.7



Developer	Razorworks
Publisher	Xplosiv, (us) Strategy First
Release date	(eu) March 20, 2008
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Off Road, released in North America as Ford Racing Off Road, is part of the Ford Racing series, and is the first (and only) in the series to feature vehicles by Land Rover, which was owned by Ford Motor Company at the time.

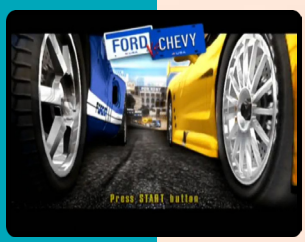
Off Road features 12 tracks, and 18 vehicles from Ford and Land Rover. The game features five game modes: Quick Race, Career, Tournament, Arcade, and Multiplayer. Career mode is the game's main mode, in which the player races to unlock new vehicles, tracks and race types. Tournament mode is a smaller version of Career mode, minus the ability to unlock new vehicles. Quick Race allows the player to begin a race on a limited number of tracks. In Arcade mode, the player can race with vehicles, tracks and race types that have been unlocked.

According to Metacritic, the game received "Generally unfavorable reviews." Official PlayStation 2 Magazine-UK wrote that the game *"Is too slow, too ugly and too pricey for what it is."* Roy Kimber of VideoGamer.com considered it to be an average racing game, writing, *"It does have a budget price tag though, so it's worth a look if you don't set your expectations too high and just want a simple, easy-to-get-into racer to keep you occupied while you wait for something better to come along."*

N P

Ford vs. Chevy

5.5

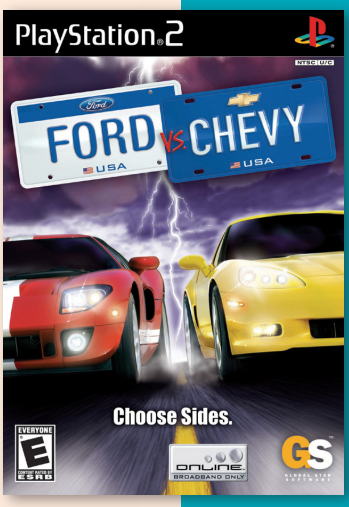


N P

Developer	Eutechnyx
Publisher	Global Star Software
Release date	(us) November 9, 2005
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-6 Players

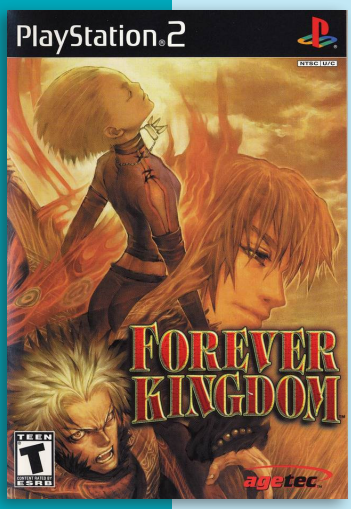
Ford vs. Chevy features 48 Chevy and Ford vehicles including the Ford GT and the Chevrolet Corvette.

Players can pick their side, either Ford or Chevy, and compete in circuit races, point to point races, time trials, drag races, and other events. They can tweak their car to get the most performance possible by getting over a hundred parts from over twenty manufactures.



Forever Kingdom

6.4

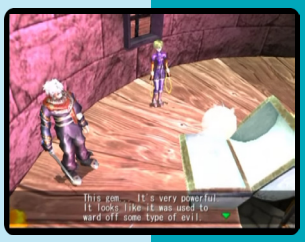


Developer	From Software
Publisher	From Software, (us) Agetec
Release date	(jp) June 21, 2001
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Forever Kingdom is the prequel to Evergrace set directly before those events. The player controls Darius (the main character), Ruyan (the childhood friend), and Faeana (the amnesiac). While traveling the party comes upon a strange girl named Solca, who is summarily kidnapped by an evil wizard named Darsul. During that event, the party is cursed by Darsul, and they now share 1 life bar.

Battles occur in real-time, and the player can freely switch controls to any of the three characters. Skills are gained through equipping items. Each character is assigned a button and can use their skills by pressing that button. Using multiple skills from each character can result in combos that give bonus damage.

"mobygames.com"



J N

Forgotten Realms: Demon Stone

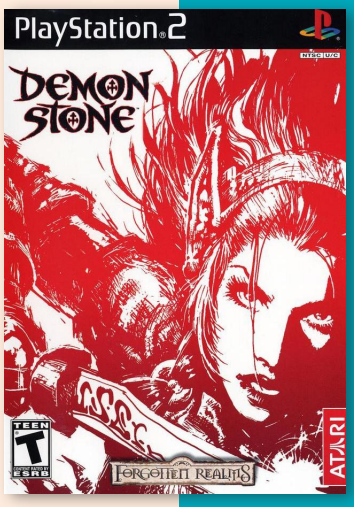
7.1

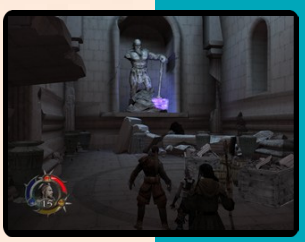
J N P

Developer	Stormfront Studios
Publisher	Atari
Release date	(us) September 14, 2004
Genre	Action role-playing, Hack and slash
Mode	1 Player

Forgotten Realms: Demon Stone is set in the Forgotten Realms campaign setting for Dungeons & Dragons, but the gameplay only vaguely models D&D's structure. The story was written by R.A. Salvatore and features the voices of Patrick Stewart as Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun and Michael Clarke Duncan as Ygorl.

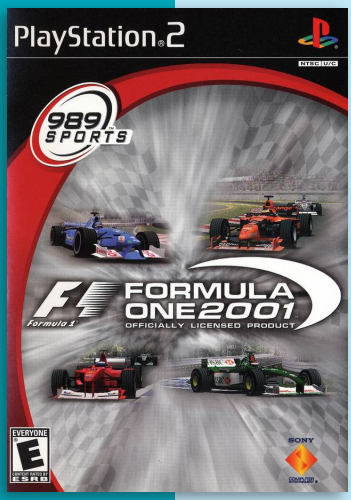
Players have control over three characters and can change character at any time (after all three main heroes arrive). There are several fighting moves, and players must use each character's skills to play the game effectively. Rannek uses a sword and breaks things with his gauntlets. Illius fights with a staff and uses magic. Zhai uses two daggers and becomes invisible in shadows—this is useful for sneaking up on enemies and killing them. Although much of the game is hack-and-slash, there are several tasks that require the use of various skills.

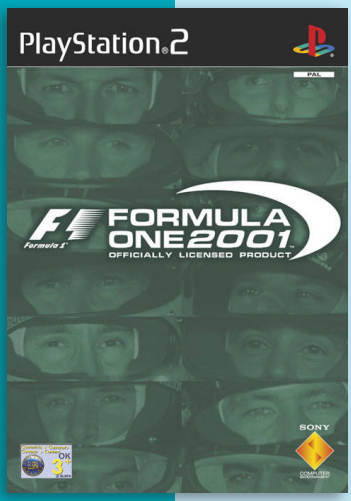




Formula One 2001

7.3





JNP

Developer	Sony Studio Liverpool
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(eu) April 20, 2001
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Formula One 2001 was the last simulation Formula One game to appear on the original PlayStation and the first game to support the Logitech GT Force racing wheel on the PlayStation 2 version.

The game's "arcade" mode followed a similar line to that of Formula One 2000, although incentives were now offered in the form of upgrades to the player's car.

A new mode—"Challenge" mode—was introduced. In Challenge mode, players were given a lap around Spa-Francorchamps in Jenson Button's Benetton B201. Players who achieved a fast lap time were given a verification code, and were given the opportunity to post their winning times on the Internet to compare their times to other people's if they have an account.

In some editions, a DVD was given for free. The DVD offers a commentated review of the 2000 season, race by race, with the option to toggle between viewing the main stream, an on-board car camera, view the pitlane or see on-screen data such as lap times and positions. These features were used in the former pay-per-view F1 Digital+'s interactive coverage.

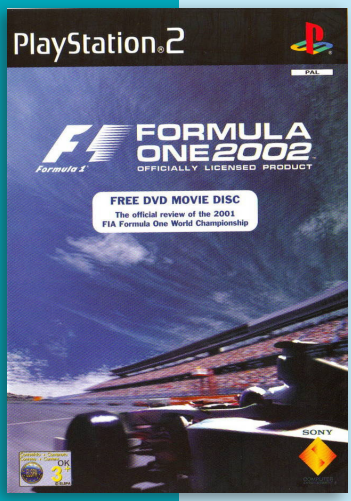
Formula One 2001 was created with the help of Benetton, Jaguar, Jordan and Arrows. Many of the employees from former franchise owner Psygnosis aided in the development. At the peak of development, the game was worked upon by 25 people with a majority of them being programmers and artists.

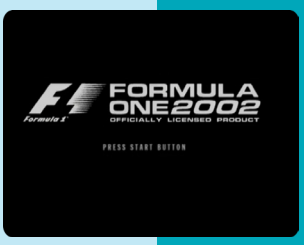
The game's engine was based upon a Research and Development project that began two years before the release of the game. This was to develop the physics, collision and A.I. for the game. Sony had an extensive reference library for the tracks including aerial photographs, close-ups of the tracks and over 200 hours of race footage from F1 Digital+. The PlayStation 2 graphical capabilities allowed the team to include more detail such as trackside details which were previously omitted and unique cockpit camera angles.

The game received a mostly positive response from critics upon release.

Formula One 2002

7.5





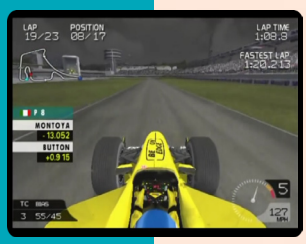
Developer	Sony Studio Liverpool
Publisher	SCEE, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(eu) November 1, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Formula One 2002 was based on the actual early 2002 season. The game includes the new Hockenheim circuit, revised Nürburgring track, the Renault and Toyota teams. The graphics are similar to THQ's MotoGP 2. The game features all the drivers, teams and tracks from this season. A variety of single and multiplayer game modes, including full Race Weekend, World Championship, Time Attack, Hotseat and Arcade modes. It came bundled with free DVD - The official review of the 2001 FIA Formula One World Championship.

This was the first ever Formula One game featuring the Launch Control despite the system being introduced prior to 2001 Spanish Grand Prix.

Formula One 2003

6.5



Developer	Sony Studio Liverpool
Publisher	SCEE
Release date	(eu) July 11, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Formula One 2003 is the first of the Formula One series with an exclusive licence from Formula One Administration.

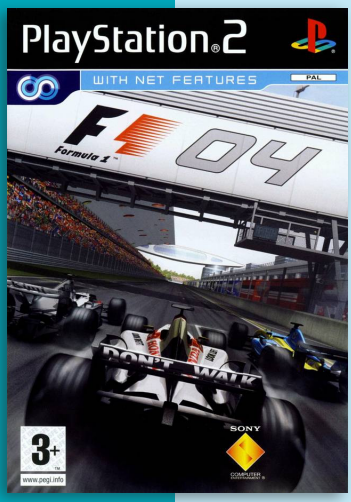
The game features all ten teams and twenty drivers competing in the 2003 season (except for mid-season changes), as well as the sixteen circuits and Grands Prix that formed the championship calendar. The game also includes the new one-shot qualifying rules and points system introduced for the season, as well as the alterations to the Hungaroring and Suzuka circuits.

There are eleven game modes available for single and multiplayer, including single player arcade and simulation single race, time trial and championship modes, multiplayer for up to 4 players and a non-interactive spectator option.

The game features all the drivers and tracks from the 2003 season, but does not represent the replacement drivers that featured in the real F1 season, therefore Nicolas Kiesa, Zsolt Baumgartner, Marc Gené and Takuma Sato are not featured.

Formula One 04

6.8



J P

Developer	Sony Studio Liverpool
Publisher	SCEE, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(eu) June 2004
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (10) Players

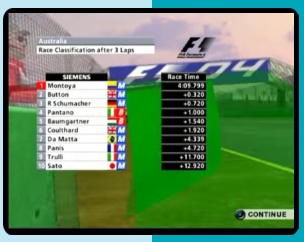
Formula One 04 features all ten teams and twenty drivers competing in the 2004 season (except for mid-season changes), as well as the eighteen circuits and Grands Prix that formed the championship, including the new Bahrain International Circuit and Shanghai International Circuit.

It is the first Formula One game to contain a 'Career mode', which allowed players to work their way through the Formula One teams over the course of a fixed number of seasons (albeit a repeat version of the 2004 season each time). Players would start out testing in a generic Formula One car, and if they did well enough in the test they would be offered a contract by a small team such as Minardi. Players would then work their way up the grid throughout their 'career' through a mixture of good tests and impressive race performances. This game also had Net Play available.

This is the only F1 game in the series to be changed in terms of gameplay after the original release. In the original version, there was a bug which when during the timing of AI pitstops all the field crawled at pit lane speed, then they sped up once a few of the AI cars had made their stop, and it was very common to be following a car which suddenly came to a halt and you would end up hitting their rear and ending your race. Studio Liverpool responded to the fans concerns about this issue and fixed this glitch upon the release of the Platinum version.

Formula One 04 features all the drivers and tracks from the 2004 season, but does not represent the replacement drivers that featured in the real F1 season, therefore Timo Glock, Marc Gené, Antônio Pizzonia, Jacques Villeneuve and Ricardo Zonta are not featured.

Formula One 04 received positive reviews on release. Steve Boxer of The Guardian praised the graphics, the car handling, and the inclusion of all eighteen tracks but criticised the difficulty of the career mode and the lack of help in the car setup, stating *"it is impossible to do anything other than tool around at the back of the field without tinkering with your car's setup"*.



Formula One 05

7.5

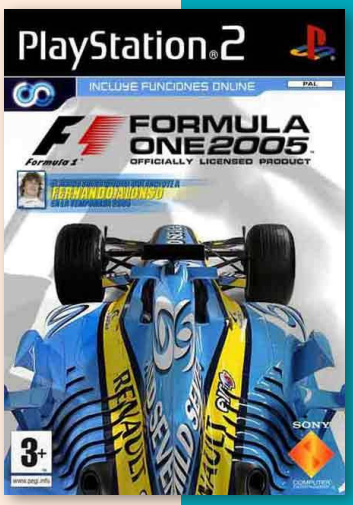
Developer	Sony Studio Liverpool
Publisher	SCEE, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(eu) July 1, 2005
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (10) Players

Formula One 05 featured the 'Career Mode' concept from Formula One 04, which allows players to work their way through the Formula One teams over the course of five years (albeit a repeat version of the 2005 season each time). This game also supports EyeToy: Cameo, allowing players to place their own face on a driver when creating their profile, but unlike F1 04, though they cannot choose their own helmet at the start, the player assumes a white unmarked helmet and only later unlocks other colours and designs.

Players start out testing for a smaller teams (Minardi, Jordan and Red Bull Racing). Players then work their way up the grid throughout their 'career' through a mixture of good tests and impressive race performances. As before, consistently poor performances will lead to dismissal from the player's current team. There are also occasional 'shoot-out' tests against the team's second driver (or third driver, depending on the player's current status within the team), in which both drivers complete a set of five laps each and whoever has the fastest overall time (one time based on the fastest first, second and third sectors added together) then takes the race seat. Players can now also view trophies they have received from winning races and championships after each is won in Career Mode for the first time.

As with F1 04, "classic" cars (like the Williams FW11) are unlocked once certain terms are fulfilled, such as winning a World Championship. Helmets for Career Mode are also unlocked, and there is also a hidden track (the Detroit street circuit which was used for Detroit Grand Prix and the Paul Ricard circuit in France available for Time Attack Mode. Notably, since this game was developed before the change in the qualifying regulations midway through the actual 2005 season, this game runs the original "aggregated times" format from the early part of the actual 2005 season in every race in Race Weekend, Championship and Career Mode. This game also has Net Play available. A notable credit is the opening video features the song "Butterflies & Hurricanes" from English alternative rock band Muse.

Alt. PAL cover



J P

Formula One 06

7.6

Developer	Sony Studio Liverpool
Publisher	SCEE, (jp) SCEI
Release date	(eu) July 28, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Formula One 06 is the fifteenth game of the official Formula One video games series.

The game continues the tradition of a career mode, an option in place since the 2004 game. Formula One 06 uses the previous F1 game engine but with minor modifications (team and driver select with team mode has a team logo). This is also the last game in the Formula One series to be released on the PlayStation 2.

In career mode, the player begins their career with either Super Aguri, Toro Rosso or Midland F1. Their position within the team, either a test driver; second driver or first driver, depends on how well the player performs during the trial sessions, and thereafter. The test sessions are either held at the Circuit de Catalunya; Silverstone or Magny-Cours circuits and can also be played out in either dry or wet conditions.

The trial sessions vary from completing one “Flying Lap” to ten laps to beat the Target Time. Also, this target time can be an “Accumulative Target Time” where the player has four or three laps in which to consistently post fast times. The fastest laps are then added together and then compared to the Accumulative Target Time.

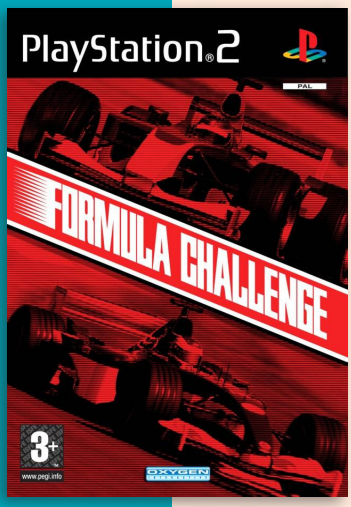
The player’s career lasts a total of five Grand Prix seasons, in which they attempt to become a World Champion. This will most likely happen with the most competitive teams, e.g. Renault, Ferrari, McLaren or Honda.

In addition, certain prizes can be unlocked once certain criteria have been fulfilled, e.g. winning a grand prix, and unlocking an award such as the test track, Jerez. A trophy cabinet section is also featured so players can view the trophies they have won in different Grand Prix, or in the world championship. The F1 car that a player won the championship with is also displayed.

The game also features the new knockout qualifying system, introduced at the start of the season, with three qualifying sessions. Other new additions include the formation lap and a much more competitive AI from previous F1 games in the series.

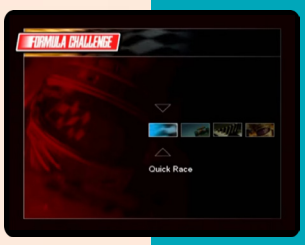
Formula Challenge

7.1



Developer	Aqua Pacific
Publisher	Oxygen Interactive
Release date	(eu) June 25, 2004
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Formula Challenge is a formula 1 game aimed at beginners. There are two single player modes: quick race and championship. The championship consists of ten races with two qualifying laps and up to ten laps and each. The number of laps is adjustable. Unlike other formula 1 games the handling and physics simulation is action oriented. The tracks are set in Europe, America, Africa and Asia.



P

Formula Suzuki Hayabusa Time Attack

Developer	Yuke's
Publisher	Yuke's
Release date	(jp) 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

Suzuki distributed this video game/demo for free as a promotion of Formula Suzuki Hayabusa racing car. The game feature two courses; Falcon circuit and Malaysian circuit, a time attack and a VS mode.

With only 10.000 copies made the disc is considered to be rare.

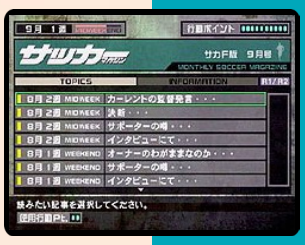
J

Formation Final

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) September 18, 2003
Genre	Sports, Simulation
Mode	1-2 Players

Formation Final is a soccer management simulation game, built on the engine from International Superstar Soccer 3. There are over 90 different clubs and 30 national teams that the player can take charge of, setting up training schedules, giving players individual advice, and making calls on the field. There is also a two-player mode where saved teams can be matched against one another.

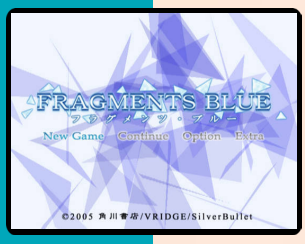
"mobygames.com"

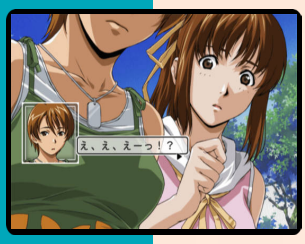


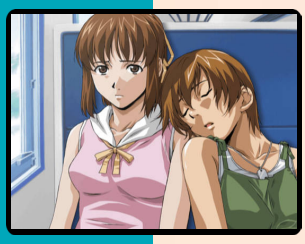
J

7.0

Fragments Blue







J

Developer	SilverBullet
Publisher	Kadokawa
Release date	(jp) January 19, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

One summer day, a young man named Kaname Ōsaka receives a letter with no return address. “If you remember where I fell, go there with Momoka and search.” The letter includes a small key, and is signed by Chika Yazawa, Kaname’s childhood friend and Momoka’s sister. However, Chika had died two years earlier when no donor could be found for a heart transplant. Kaname and Momoka, along with their friend Natsune, have no idea what the letter means, but decide they must investigate.

Fragments Blue is a mystery-themed visual novel with light investigation elements. The player takes the role of Kaname who, along with his two female friends, goes to investigate the circumstances surrounding the strange letter he received. The story proceeds with lightly-animated illustrations and fully-voiced dialogue, and at certain points the player must choose from multiple responses, which determine the direction of the story and lead to different endings.

As the story proceeds, the player collects various pieces of information, which are collected in an in-game log and can be reviewed at any time.

“mobygames.com”

Special Edition

6.5

Fragrance Tale

J

Developer	Takuyo
Publisher	Takuyo
Release date	(jp) April 28, 2005
Genre	Visual novel, Simulation
Mode	1 Player

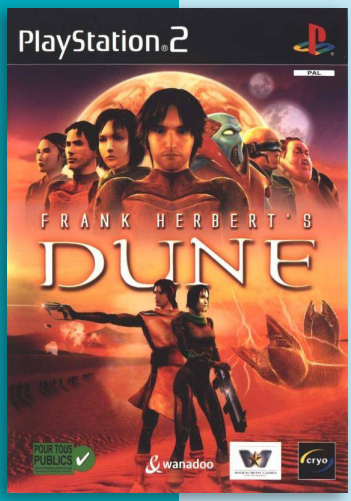
Fragrance Tale is a visual novel released for the Dreamcast and PS2. Players take the role of Liam, a boy who is visited by an angel that seeks his help in finding fragrances and perfumes which have the power to banish evil. He must embark on an adventure of finding sweet scents and making them into perfumes for use against the demons.

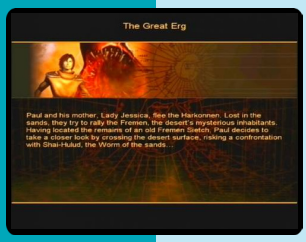
An odd adventure game, Fragrance Tale nevertheless plays similarly to other RPG games, and has a unique ‘weapon’ system.

“Smashey9@theisozone.com”

Frank Herbert's Dune

4.7





Developer	WideScreen Games
Publisher	Cryo Interactive
Release date	(eu) 2001
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Frank Herbert's Dune is a 2001 3D action game based on the 2000 Sci Fi Channel miniseries of the same name.The game was not a commercial or critical success, and was one of the last games by Cryo Interactive, which went bankrupt shortly after the game's failure.

As Paul, the son of the Duke Atreides's concubine and heir to the throne, he must earn the trust and respect from the natives of the planet Dune, the Fremen, to ultimately become their prophesied Messiah, Muad'Dib. Players will have to free them from the desolate conditions their home planet is in. But he also need to stop Lord Harkonnen, who, with covert backup from the Emperor, slaughtered his family.

The story behind each mission is accurate to the novels, though taking place during the two-year span in the 1965 novel Dune when Paul gains the trust of the Fremen.

Freak Out: Extreme Freeride

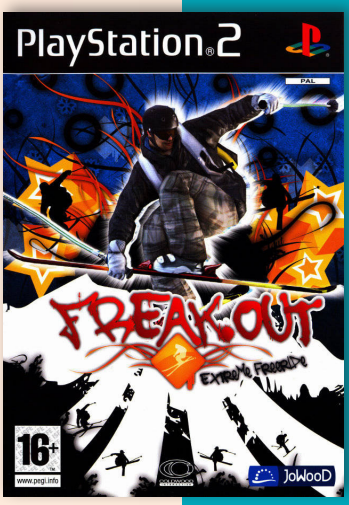
6.4

Developer	Coldwood Interactive
Publisher	JoWooD Entertainment AG, (au) Auran
Release date	(eu) March 30, 2007
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Freak Out: Extreme Freeride is an arcade skiing game, focused on performing tricks and stunts. The main mode is Mission, where players need to jump gaps, make tricks, grind rails and pick stars. Completing the different challenges is rewarded with money, exchanged for basic equipment (skis, boots, helmets) and style equipment (jackets, goggles, gloves) at the shop. It also opens up new slopes and mountains.

Mostly about tricks, players need to take care of their landings - touch the ground with back, front or side weight and a lower score multiplier is awarded. Next to the basic information on the screen such as time, score and stunts, the game also keeps track of your "flow", by doing consecutive tricks.

"mobygames.com"



Frankie Dettori Racing

7.0

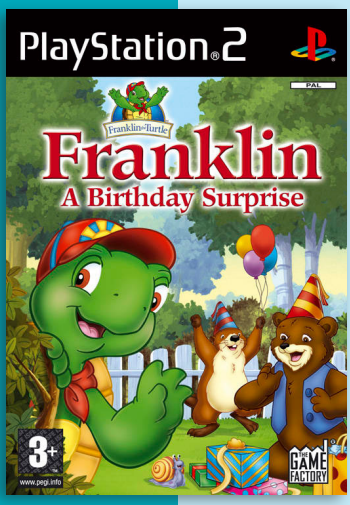
Developer	Sidhe Interactive
Publisher	Home Entertainment Suppliers, (au) Tru Blu
Release date	(au) October 26, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 - (8) Players

Melbourne Cup Challenge, also known as Frankie Dettori Racing, is a horse racing simulation based on the Melbourne Cup.

Multiplayer online play allow competitive and friendly play over the Internet. Multiple game modes including, career mode, jockey challenge, betting party. In depth Career Mode including auctions, horse breeding, training, and stable management.

Franklin: A Birthday Surprise

7.0



Developer	Neko Entertainment
Publisher	The Game Factory
Release date	(eu) March 31, 2006
Genre	Mini-games
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Franklin: A Birthday Surprise is an side-scrolling educational game. It aims to stimulate children's imagination, creativity and their ability to find solutions.

The mini games are small arcade type games, which are unlocked as rewards as the child advances through the game. The player can replay the games on a multi-player basis with other players.

Freaky Flyers

6.6

Developer	Midway Studios - San Diego
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) August 5, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Freaky Flyers is a cartoon style racing game. Players can choose from one of several different, and wacky, characters and take to the sky over various locations, each with its own set of obstacles and shortcuts. Each character has a different level of ability (for example, one may be highly accurate in cornering but slow, while another is much faster but less responsive in turning).

"mobygames.com"

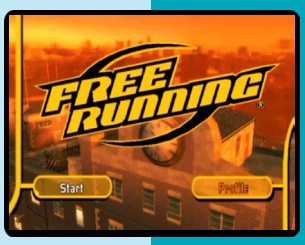
Free Running

6.6

Developer	Rebellion
Publisher	Reef Entertainment, (au) Ubisoft
Release date	(eu) April 5, 2007
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Free Running is a third-person open-environment arcade game, based around the sport of Parkour.

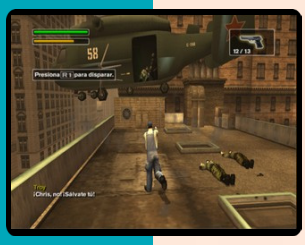
Set across multiple high and low rise urban environments, Parkour participants navigate around and over various obstacles using only the natural abilities of the human body. By stringing together spectacular gymnastic style moves, the player builds up 'flow', and is awarded points according to their agility and grace.



P

Freedom Fighters

8.1



J N P

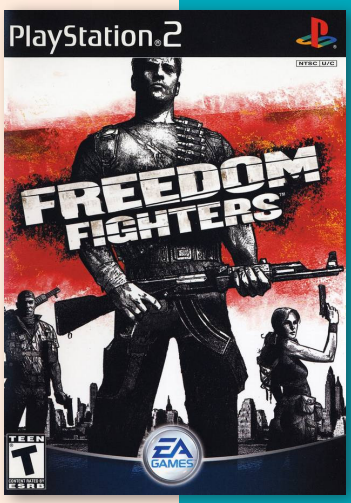
Developer	Io Interactive
Publisher	EA Games, (eu) Electronic Arts
Release date	(eu) September 26, 2003
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

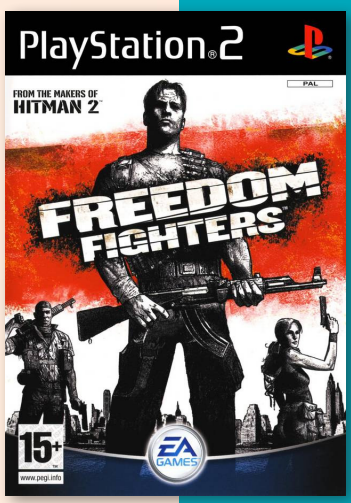
Freedom Fighters is set in an alternate history where the Soviet Union has invaded and occupied New York City. The player takes the role of Christopher Stone, a plumber turned resistance movement leader, fighting against the invaders.

Freedom Fighters is a third-person shooter, in which the player navigates through the streets of New York with a controllable squad of team mates while fighting the occupying Soviet forces. The player gains charisma points by performing various deeds, such as capturing a base or destroying enemy supplies. The more charisma gained, the more squad mates the character can recruit, up to a maximum of twelve. The player can direct recruits by giving them simple orders such as "follow," "attack," and "defend."

In 2002, EA Games officially announced Freedom: The Battle for Liberty Island, which would later be renamed Freedom Fighters, at E3. The concept for the game originally involved a turn-based strategic mode as a major element of gameplay. The game was developed by IO Interactive, using the 3D engine Glacier. This engine makes use of the OpenGL and Direct X graphic APIs.

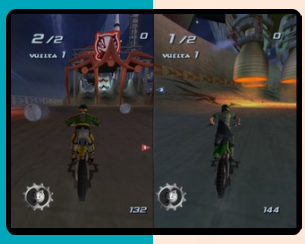
Freedom Fighters received generally positive reviews, with an average scoring of 82.69% overall by GameRankings.





Freekstyle

8.1



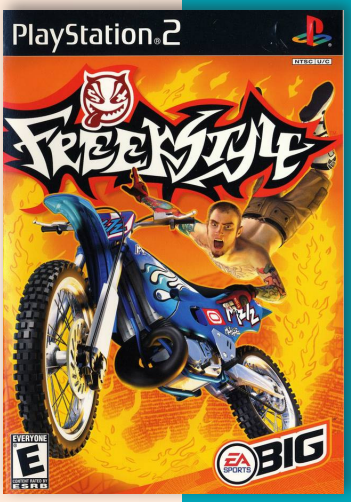
J N P

Developer	Page 44 Studios
Publisher	Electronic Arts, (us) EA Sports
Release date	(us) June 17, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Freekstyle is a EA Sports' take on motocross racing. The game is all about going fast and doing cool tricks. There are essentially two games here: first there is a straightforward racing game, where players race three laps around a circuit and attempt to finish first. The second part of the game is a freestyle competition, where they perform tricks to score points, and attempt to rack up the biggest total.

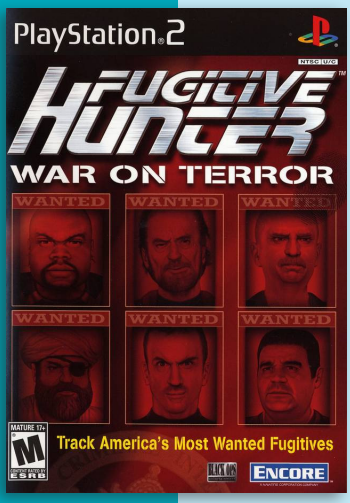
The game features the voices and likeness of several real-life motocross stars.

The game received "generally favorable reviews". Entertainment Weekly gave the PS2 version an A– and said, *"With a great two-player head-to-head mode and 100 over-the-top stunts to perform, this makes regular motocross games look downright dull by comparison."*



Fugitive Hunter: War on Terror

3.5

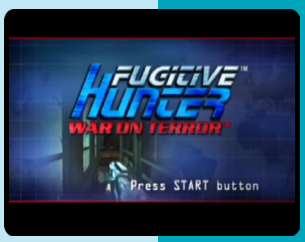


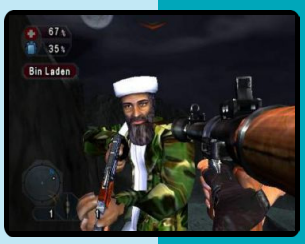
Developer	Black Ops Entertainment
Publisher	Encore Software, Inc., (eu) Play It!
Release date	(us) November 18, 2003
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

America's 10 Most Wanted, released as Fugitive Hunter: War on Terror in North America, is a typical first person shooter, featuring arcade-style, third person fights as means of capturing the level-in-question's fugitive.

Set in the present, the game places the player into the role of Jake Seaver, a CIFR agent. Travelling to locations such as Utah, Paris, and Miami, the game finalises in Afghanistan, where the player must capture Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden. The game contains 11 levels, one for each fugitive respectively, as well as a preceding introductory level.

The European and American versions differentiate slightly in level music and terrorist names with Saddam Hussein only being present in the European version. The European manual shows Mullah Omar as one of the terrorists despite being absent in both versions.

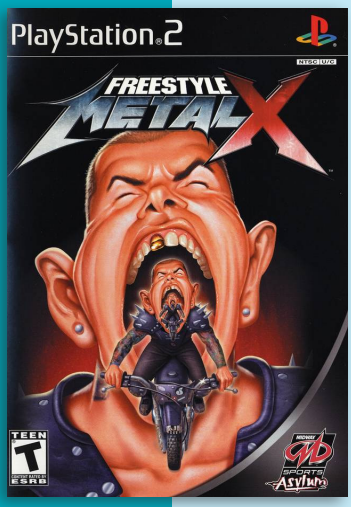




N P

Freestyle Metal X

6.7



Developer	Deibus Studios
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) June 27, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-9 Players

Freestyle MetalX is a motocross stunt game. It contains 9 pro riders and twelve licensed bikes to begin with, plus some secret ones. It is structured somewhat like the Tony Hawk series with a career mode that is a succession of levels, each one containing goals like doing specific tricks, finding gaps and finding things, which could take the form of breaking windows, running people over, etc. In this case, there are also racing goals.

N P

Friends: Seishun no Kagayaki

8.0

J

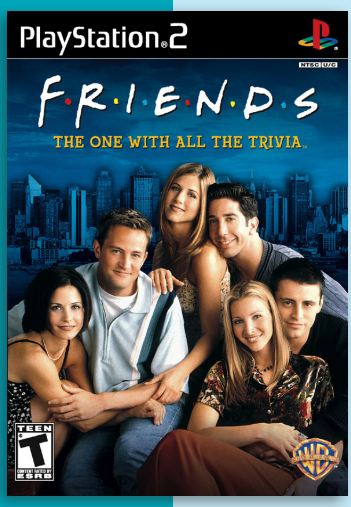
Developer	NEC Interchannel
Publisher	NEC Interchannel, Interchannel
Release date	(jp) September 30, 2004
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Friends Seishun no Kagayaki is a remake of a Japanese PC and SEGA Saturn adventure game. The PlaySтyation 2 version includes improved graphics, a lengthy CG opening, and a new world map. There are also two additional female characters.

The story start on Summer vacation. The player sets out to find his perfect match and engages in conversations with various girls, multiple-choice-style.

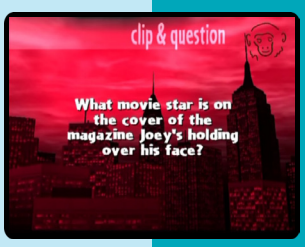
Friends: The One with All the Trivia

5.0



Developer	Artech Studios
Publisher	Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment
Release date	(us) November 15, 2005
Genre	Trivia
Mode	1-4 Players

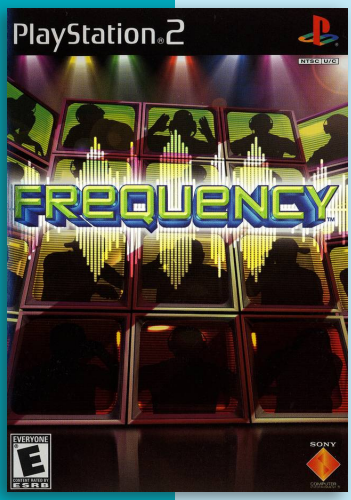
This game challenges player to answer a series of multiple-choice questions about characters and events of the 10 seasons of Friends. There are six different question categories: Relationships, Shake-ups and make-ups, Work and play, Memorable moments, Friends of friends, Wild card. Beginning of each game, player is assigned to a floor of the Friends apartment building.

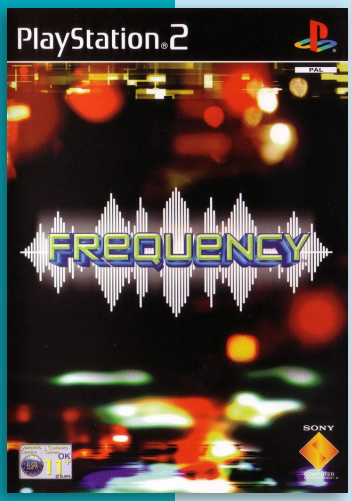


N P

Frequency

8.3





NP

Developer	Harmonix Music Systems
Publisher	SCEA, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(us) November 19, 2001
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Frequency is a music game and the first major release from Harmonix.

In the game, a player portrays a virtual avatar called a “FreQ”, and travels down an octagonal tunnel, with each wall containing a musical track. These tracks contain sequences of notes. As the player hits buttons corresponding to the note placement on the track, the “sonic energy” from within is released and the music plays. If the player plays two measures of the track without any errors, the track is “captured” and the music plays automatically until the next pre-determined section of the song. All songs featured in the game are edited for ease of play.

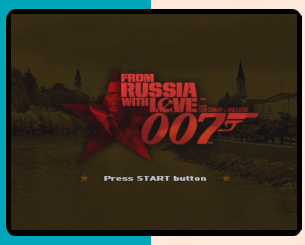
Some tracks are bonus tracks and only open up when all notes are played, allowing the user to pick up “freestyle” points. Powerups are available which allow the immediate capturing of the track or the doubling of points.

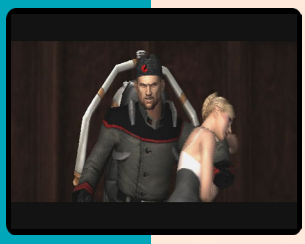
Frequency was one of the first games to be supported by the PS2 Network Adapter, allowing for up to four players to play against each other as well as to trade their remixes. Online play was added with an online-capable demo version (4 songs), supplied with the network adapter. The original disk could also be swapped after loading the demo disk, allowing online play with all songs. Multiplayer mode has all players attempting to complete the song on the same track, allowing for players to fight for the highest score. New powerups only available in multiplayer mode are able to disrupt the performance of another player. However, Sony has shut down the matchmaking server for online play and has made no provisions for third-party replacements.

Harmonix had originally pitched the concept of Frequency to Microsoft but were told by now-former vice-president of game publishing Ed Fries that no music-rhythm game would succeed without a custom hardware controller. This advice indirectly led Harmonix to become involved with Guitar Hero with a custom guitar-shaped controller, and leading to a multi-billion dollar franchise.

From Russia With Love

6.9





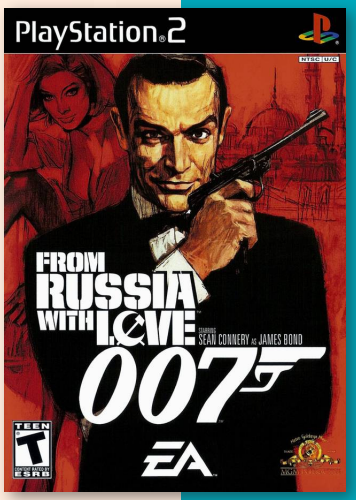
Developer	EA Redwood Shores
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) November 1, 2005
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

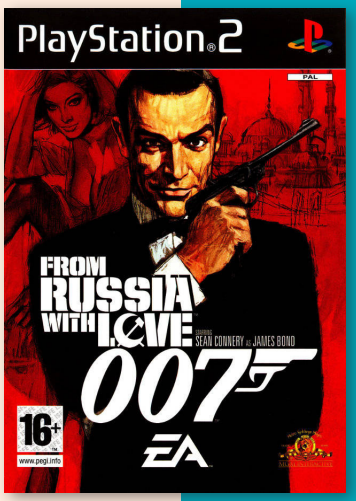
James Bond 007: From Russia with Love is a third-person shooter featuring Ian Fleming's secret agent, James Bond, whose likeness and voice is that of Sean Connery. The game is based on the 1957 novel and the film of the same name. The game follows the storyline of the book and film, with adding in new scenes to make the game more action-oriented, as well as changing the affiliation of the main villains. Additionally, it features many elements of later Bond films to recreate the feel of the era such as the Aston Martin DB5 that debuted in Goldfinger (1964) and the jet pack from Thunderball (1965). From Russia with Love is also notable in that it is the first video game to use Sean Connery's younger likeness as James Bond and the first to include all new voice work by the actor after twenty-two years away from the role.

In most of the 18 missions the player progresses through linear levels while shooting everything in sight. The player can lock onto an enemy at range and cycle between visible enemies, or focus in closer on a single enemy to make opportunistic targets appear, such as uncovered grenades or gaps in armor. Sometimes Bond can also use stealth or hand-to-hand combat, which are basically quick-time events where the player needs to press a displayed button in a limited time to dispatch a foe. Special tasks can be preformed with gadgets, e.g. the laser watch or a small remote controlled helicopter. This procedure gets spiced up with occasional driving or new jet pack sequences.

From Russia with Love is the first title developed by Electronic Arts Redwood Shores to use an integrated game engine for the third-person shooter action and driving segments. It was a new engine that was not based on any of the technology used for previous titles in the series but the result was similar to Id Tech 3.

The game was written by Bruce Feirstein who previously worked on the film scripts for GoldenEye, Tomorrow Never Dies and The World Is Not Enough, in addition to the script for the 2004 video game Everything or Nothing.





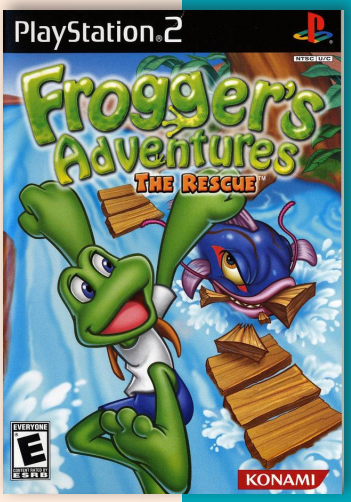
J N P

5.9

Frogger's Adventures: The Rescue

J N

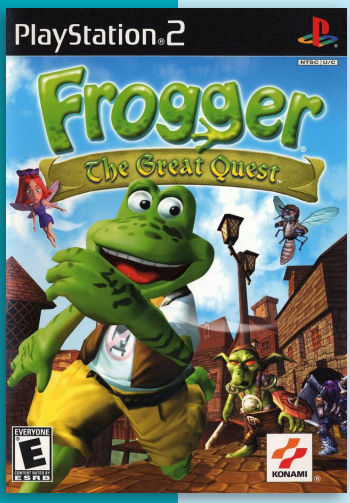
Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) October 29, 2003
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1-4 Players



Frogger's Adventures: The Rescue, known in Japan as Frogger Rescue, is based on the original 1981 Frogger arcade game, and contains similar hop-and-dodge style gameplay. Frogger, however, can perform many moves that he could not in the original. Frogger can perform a "super hop" which allows him to jump over the space in front of him, as well as being able to move footholds and sections of certain walls with his tongue. Frogger can also rotate left and right.

Multiplayer mode contains nine mini-games that can be played with up to four players. Initially, only one game is available, but a new one becomes unlocked when Frogger completes the training level, and each time he completes all the levels in a world.

Frogger: The Great Quest



Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) November 18, 2001
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

3.2

N P

Frogger: The Great Quest is the first game in the series developed by Konami, and the first since Hasbro Interactive released Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge in 2000. It introduced a new look, being the first in the series to be set in a 3-D platform environment. It is also the first to feature Frogger as a biped wearing clothes.

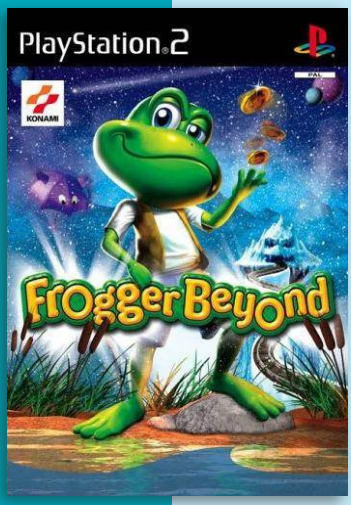
The game is more of an adventure than a challenge, being particularly aimed at children. The game is well known for its inaccurate controls and lazy camera view. The game is sometimes compared to Rayman 2: The Great Escape and Rascal in terms of graphics and overall themes.

The game is dedicated in memory of its fallen voice actor, Steve Sheppard-Brodie, who was the voice of Lumpy the Toad, Count Blah the Vampire, and The Magical General of Light and Industry.

IGN rated the game a score of 3 out of 10.

Frogger Beyond

6.9



Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) June 26, 2003
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

In this game, Frogger has to go through his "rite of passage." Making his transition from boy-frog to teenage-frog. In order to make that transition, Frogger have to enter a magic portal that will warp him into different worlds. These worlds serve as a personal test for Frogger to prove that he is a teenager.

Players must move Frogger to the end of many maze-like, trap ridden levels.

J P

Frogger: Ancient Shadow

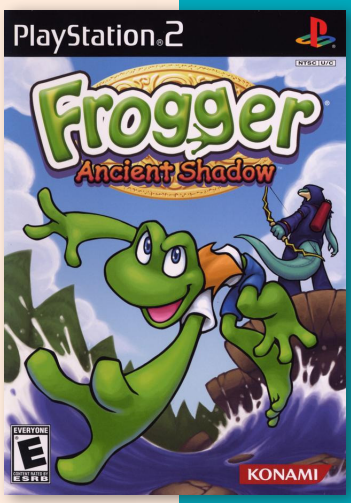
5.4

Developer	Hudson Soft
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(us) September 27, 2005
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1-4 Players

While his friend Lumpy is away, Frogger learns from his girlfriend Lily that the evil crocodile Dr. Wani is threatening Firefly Swamp. He must save his home by solving puzzles, collecting gold coins and dodging hazards. In addition to running and jumping, Frogger can also manipulate objects with his tongue. The game's single-player story mode spans seven worlds and twenty-eight levels.

"mobygames.com"

N



Fruit Machine Mania

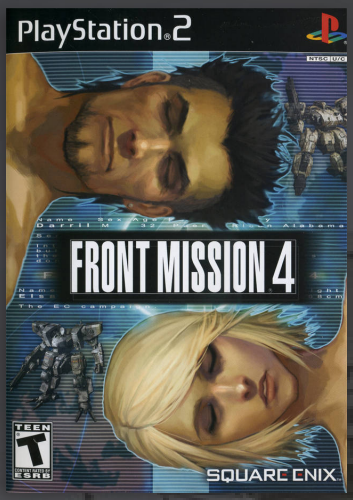
3.0

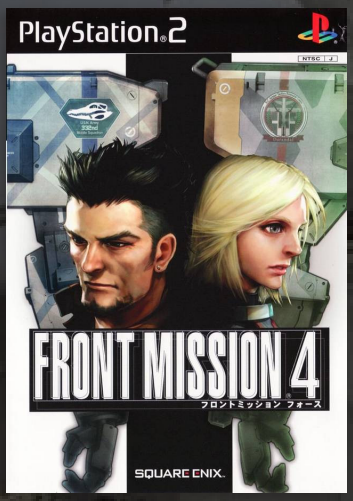
Developer	OG International Ltd
Publisher	OG International Ltd
Release date	(eu) May 12, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

Fruit Machine Mania features six different slot machines, which the player unlocks in sequence by building up points through play. Players start with a set number of 'turns', which are used to set the machine in motion and win points. Bonus games can be triggered to win back turns as the game expands the play experience beyond what a traditional fruit machine can offer.

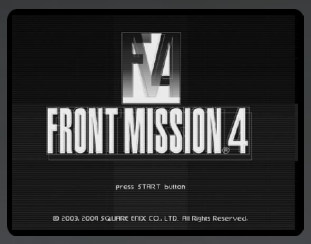
P

7.5





Front Mission 4



Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2003
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Front Mission 4 is a tactical role-playing game and the fourth main entry and sixth entry overall in the Front Mission series. Like other Front Mission titles, Front Mission 4 is part of a serialized storyline that follows the stories of various characters and their struggles involving mecha known as wanzers.

The game takes place in the late 21st century where superstates compete for the world's resources, and two individuals are sent to investigate when five bases of one nation are attacked unprovoked by persons unknown. The game was developed to sound different musically than previous titles, with South American instruments like the pan flute were used to compose a more dynamic musical structure.

Front Mission 4 borrows several of the gameplay mechanics found in Front Mission 2. The video game progresses in a linear manner: watch cut-scene events, complete missions, set up their wanzers during intermissions, and sortie for the next mission. The player travels to locations on a world map. As the player progresses through the plot, new locations are revealed on the world map. Towns and cities act as intermission points where the player can organize and set up their units for the upcoming mission. Battle zones are where the missions take place, though they become inaccessible upon the completion of a mission. Like in Front Mission 2, Front Mission 4 alternates control between the game's two main characters. However, the two scenarios never merge at any point of the game.

The missions are traditional tactical RPG fare, ranging from destroying all enemy targets to protecting a certain allied target. There are a number of returning features from Front Mission 2 that are used for mission play, namely Action Points (AP) and Links. AP is a feature that dictates how much actions can be done with each unit. Actions such as moving and attacking require a certain amount of AP to use. At the end of a full turn, which is one Player Phase and Enemy Phase, a set amount of AP is replenished. A unit's AP amount and recharge value depends on how many AP-specific abilities its pilot has learned.

Links is a feature that allows multiple units to provide offensive and defensive support to each other during battles. Unlike in Front Mission 2 and Front Mission 3, players have greater control over Links. Up to four units can be linked together to form one "link"; an offensive link for Player Phase battles, and a defensive link for Enemy Phase battles. Additionally, the player can dictate the degree of support a unit can provide; a linked unit can use battle skills or no battle skills at all. For linked actions, a weapon must be set in order to participate in an offensive or defensive linked battle. Lastly, two special actions can also be set as linked actions: Antilock and Salvage from EMP and radio backpacks, respectively. Antilock causes missiles within range to miss, while Salvage restores any wanzers destroyed in battle.

Returning features aside, Front Mission 4 has a number of new gameplay mechanics. Weap-

ons are now capable of attacking more than once during any battle, provided that the unit initiating the attack has sufficient AP and weapon ammunition. The time of day affects a weapon's chances of hitting its target; for example, accuracy is lowered during night time. Weather conditions affect the effective range of weapons; for example, a blizzard will reduce a machine gun's maximum firing range by one square. Like in Front Mission Alternative, there are new auxiliary backpacks that offer unique features when used on the battlefield. In addition to the item, turbo, and repair backpacks, players can now use jetpacks, sensor backpacks, EMP backpacks, and radio backpacks.

Sensor backpacks are equipped with sonar and radar sensors that extend the firing range of missile launchers. EMP backpacks are armed with EMP waves that disable various functions on its target. Jetpacks have built-in verniers that allow a wanzer to scale buildings and directly bypass obstacles such as water. Radio backpacks have communications equipment that allows a wanzer to act as a forward air controller by signaling a transport to drop supplies, armor coating, or call in an air strike. Aside from these new additions, turbo backpacks now come with a small amount of item space and repair backpacks can remove EMP-inflicted status damage.

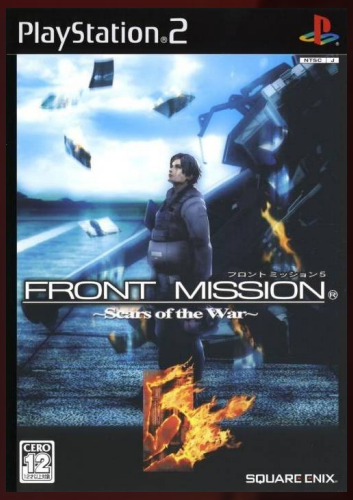
The game was put on display at E3 in May 2004, with the games director Toshiro Tsuchida explaining the plot and new features including voice chat. The game featured only English voiceover, and had in Japan was subtitled. The North American release of the game featured some cosmetic changes, such as the change of the USN to the UCS and the German Maltese cross roundel on the Bundeswehr units changed to a simple black X emblem.

The soundtrack was composed by Hidenori Iwasaki, with some tracks contributed by Ryo Yamazaki. The game was Iwasaki's first as a composer, as he had previously only worked as a synthesizer programmer. The music has been described as very different from the "very abstract and heavy" music of the previous game, and much more similar to the music of the first game with an emphasis on melody as well as light and thematic elements. The soundtrack also incorporates "South American"-style elements, with the use of pan flutes and tribal percussion.

Front Mission 4 sold 169,606 copies in Japan by the end of 2003. Additionally, it was the top-selling game during the week of Christmas in Japan. It was re-released alongside other titles in the series in Square Enix's Ultimate Hits line on May 11, 2006. Around the time of the Ultimate Hits re-release, Front Mission 4 sold over 260,000 copies in Japan.

Front Mission 4 holds a 75% on both GameRankings and Metacritic. North American reaction to the game was consistent across the board, receiving mixed to generally good reviews. It was praised for its deep gameplay, customizable wanzers, and high production values. On the disapproving side many felt the plot advanced at a sluggish pace, the AI was subpar, and the menu system was cumbersome at times. At least 4 of the critics below mentioned the high complexity of the game would be a benefit or a fault of the game depending on the player. Official PlayStation Magazine summed it up best with *"Outside of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms series, nothing surpasses the complexity of FM4."* The critic consensus seemed to be that fans of mecha or strategy RPG games would be pleased with Front Mission 4 and that the general audience should rent it first.

8.3

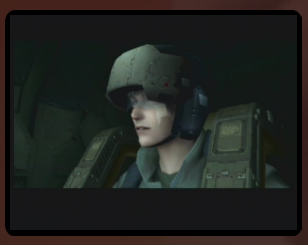


Front Mission 5: Scars of the War

Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) December 29, 2005
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Front Mission 5: Scars of the War is the sixth main entry and ninth entry overall in the Front Mission series.

Unlike all other Front Mission titles, the story of Scars of the War uses a very different approach. Set over the course of five decades starting from 2070, the game encapsulates and concludes the entire serialized storyline. All unresolved plot elements from past Front Mission entries are finally brought to their conclusion as the story unfolds. However, because of this storytelling approach, only players who have played all of the previous entries can fully understand the game's story. These entries are: Front Mission 2089, Front Mission 2089-II, Front Mission: Online, Front Mission, Front Mission 2, Front Mission 3, and Front Mission 4. Additionally, there are several story elements from Front Mission Alternative that are also resolved in the game.



Front Mission 5: Scars of the War borrows much of the core gameplay mechanics found in Front Mission 2, as well as a plethora of features from other Front Mission entries. The game progresses in a linear manner: watch cut-scene events, complete missions, set up their wanzers during intermissions, and sortie for the next mission. Military bases and supply camps act as intermission points where the player can organize and set up their units for the upcoming mission.

Missions in Scars of the War are traditional tactical RPG fare, ranging from destroying all enemy targets to protecting a certain allied target.

Scars of the War has a number of new gameplay mechanics, the most notable being friendly fire. Unlike other Front Mission titles, any units in a weapon's line of fire will be subject to being hit by its rounds. Each weapon class has a distinct firing path; for example, shotgun rounds spread in mid-flight and can hit units away from its firing path. Another new addition is part skills; parts can be equipped with special features that grant them unique properties. For example, rifles can shoot through multiple targets in its line of fire with the part skill "Piercing". Auxiliary backpacks from Front Mission 4 that make a return include: item, turbo, repair, jetpack, sensor, and EMP backpacks. Several of the auxiliary backpacks have new functions: item backpacks come with a small increase in power output, sensor backpacks can use EMP, and EMP backpacks can add armor coats or repair damaged parts.

Outside of battles, Scars of the War also boasts a New Game + option as well as a Hard Mode difficulty setting. Other returning features from other Front Mission entries include: Arena, Battle Simulator, briefings, mission branching, and remodeling. Other new features to Scars of the War include: part sorting, scouting, Survival Simulator, and Theater Mode.

Arena is a feature where the player can field a number of pilots to battle Arena combatants, controlled by AI, for monetary rewards (Command Points). The player can also battle characters from past

Front Mission entries.

Briefings are shown to aid the player about mission conditions, special notes, and special enemies. Pictures, streaming data, and the ability to review the mission area are used to illustrate these details.

Battle Simulator is a VR simulator where the player can improve the combat proficiencies of their pilots. These simulators can be taken and repeated at any given time.

Mission branching is an option that allows the player to choose what type of mission they can play next. This feature is seen several times in the game.

Parts and weapons that are purchased can be upgraded through remodeling. New to remodeling in this game is part optimization; when using Remodel Points (RP), a part can transform into one of many derivative versions from its part set.

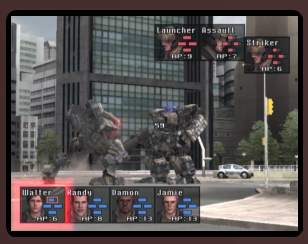
Parts, auxiliary backpacks, weapons, and items can be arranged in a number of ways through part sorting.

Scouting allows the player to recruit extra pilots to their platoon. The range of pilots that can be recruited increases as the game progresses. Over 80 pilots can be scouted, with a maximum of 12 pilots being used at any given time.

Survival Simulator is a simulator where the player goes through a set number of floors with one pilot. Upon completing the simulator or finding the item "Escape Code", the player can end the simulation and bring items found in the floors back to the main game. Any leftover item space is converted into RP.

In Theater Mode, the player can view event cut-scenes that have taken place based on when the save file was made. Players can also change their wanzer setups at any given time.

Front Mission 5 was developed by Square Enix's sixth production team, under the direction of the series' creator Toshiro Tsuchida. The team is the same that worked on Front Mission 4, albeit with new members. The developers intended for Front Mission 5 to have a more cinematic focus than previous installments — the game was the series' first foray into cut scene-based storytelling.



The game was showcased in non-playable form at the Tokyo Game Show of September 2005. A postcard exchangeable for a limited-edition Trading Arts figure - Glen's Kyojun wanzer - was included as a bonus for pre-ordering the game.

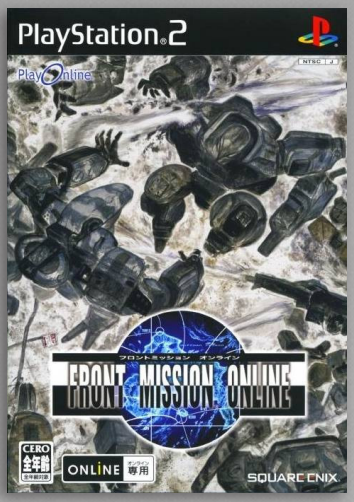
The soundtrack, which is the longest in the series, was primarily composed by Hidenori Iwasaki, with contributions from Kenichiro Fukui and one track written by Iwasaki's synth operator Yasuhiro Yamanaka. The commercial song "Blue Stream" was composed by Masayoshi Soken.

In RPG Fan's Games of 2006 feature, the reasons for it being the Import RPG of the Year make note of the game's improvements and excellent execution in design and functionality. The game was also voted the runner-up Strategy RPG of the Year by RPG Fan in their "Games of 2006" awards.

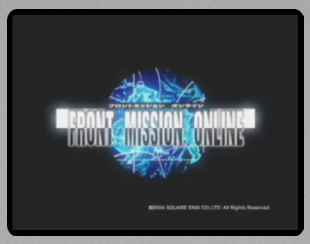
A complete English translation for the original Front Mission 5: Scars of the War version was released as fan-made patch on December 29, 2009 by the group Front Mission: Series Translation Project.

7.0

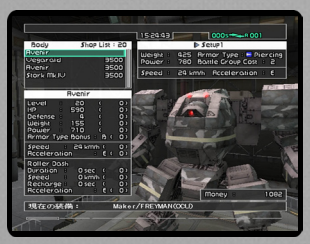
Front Mission Online



J



Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) May 12, 2005
Genre	MMO, third-person shooter
Mode	1 Player



Front Mission: Online MMO, third-person shooter. Like other Front Mission titles, Front Mission: Online is part of a serialized storyline that follows the stories of various characters and their struggles involving mecha known as wanzers. The game's servers were closed on May 31, 2008.

Set in 2090, the story of Front Mission: Online takes place on Huffman Island, a fictional Pacific Ocean island roughly the size of Oahu, created by volcanic activity south of Mexico's west coast in 1995. The plot takes players from the beginning of the 2nd Huffman Conflict to its end in 2091. Unlike Front Mission, the game's plot covers both the minor and major events that occur during the war, such as the war-ending Operation Eagle Tears (coincidentally, this was also the final military operation, taking place from May 27 to May 31, 2008). Online revolves around four military units that play a major role in the war: the Chasm Owls (O.C.U.), Iron Hearts (O.C.U.), Proud Eagles (U.S.N.), and the 17th Mobile Company (U.S.N.). These four military units influence how the war turns out, from the early stages when the U.S.N. military was winning the war, to the later stages when the O.C.U. military begins using mercenary outfits. Throughout the game's service, players could fight alongside or against characters and groups from Front Mission. Additionally, characters from the other Front Mission entries made appearances in several missions or military operations as either allies or enemies.

As a massively multiplayer online, third-person shooter spin-off, the gameplay of Front Mission: Online differs from the tactical role-playing game entries of the numbered Front Mission titles. Rather than being played out on a grid-based map and using a turn-based structure, battles takes place in real-time on full 3D maps akin to Armored Core. The player controls a mech known as the Wanderpanzer, or wanzer. Players in Online can play alone, or in groups of up to 20 players. The game has built-in support for VoIP, which can be used to communicate with other players.

Game progression in Online works differently from other Front Mission entries. As an MMO, players have complete control over how they want to play the game. When a player creates an account, they will be asked to choose a side to fight for - the O.C.U. or the U.S.N.. Next, the player must create a character to play as; character creation in Online works similarly to character creation methods found in other MMOs. Once a character has been created, the player can then begin playing the game. There are two modes of play - PvE or PvP. In PvE mode, players do battle against enemies controlled by AI. In PvP mode, players do battle against other players of the game.

The PvE mode of Online is unique in that like the other Front Mission titles, there is a storyline that the player can play through. After the player completes a certain amount of missions, they can participate in military operations, which are a series of missions. These military operations progress

the storyline. Furthermore, there are limited-time only operations which are open to all players. Unlike missions, military operations are one-time only events and cannot be replayed. The PvP mode of Online, on the other hand, does not have any story elements. Players pick a battle zone on Huffman Island and fight on it, with the winning side taking control of the zone. Battle zones affect the type of missions that a player can go through in PvE mode. For example, if a U.S.N. military base is captured by O.C.U. forces, U.S.N. players can take a mission to recapture it. Likewise, U.S.N. players can take a mission to defend the base if it was not captured. There are many types of missions, ranging from simple destruction requests to more complex reconnaissance ones.

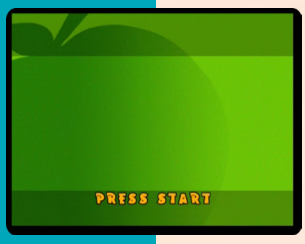
When a player is not currently involved in a mission or military operation, they are stationed at military bases and supply camps on Huffman Island. In here, they can customize their wanzers, purchase battle gear for their pilots, form groups with other players, or fight other players in the Arena to earn extra money and parts. Players can also defect to the other side if their combat proficiency is at a certain level. Defecting players are demoted by one military rank and lose all of their items, except those that are equipped on their pilot and wanzer. Wanzer customization in Online works differently from other Front Mission titles in that the parts, auxiliary backpacks, and weapons the player can access is entirely dependent on their military ranking. Military rankings work in a progression-based fashion; players must complete missions and military operations to advance in rank. A player can also raise their rank by scoring kills on computer-controlled enemies or players fighting for the other side.

Missions aside, Online boasts other new features as well as returning ones, particularly from Front Mission Series: Gun Hazard and Front Mission Alternative. The game introduces many new auxiliary backpacks and weapon types. A new kind of auxiliary backpack is the stealth backpack; this protects a wanzer from being detected on enemy radar and/or can render the wanzer invisible to the naked eye if an optical stealth backpack is used. The burst bazooka is a bazooka fires multiple bazooka rounds in quick succession; it has a high damage output, but is offset by its slow reload times. There are also hybrid shield/weapons that have both an offensive and a defensive feature. Returning features in Online include remodeling and Cockpit Mode. Once a player has reached a certain rank, they can add upgrades to their parts and weapons to make them more effective. Cockpit Mode, which allows players to control the action in a first-person view, has been expanded to allow for zooming in and zooming out of the battle camera. This allows for precision aiming and shooting, which is ideal for weapons such as sniper rifles and bazookas.

Front Mission: Online sold over 42,000 copies in Japan by the end of 2005.

Fruitfall

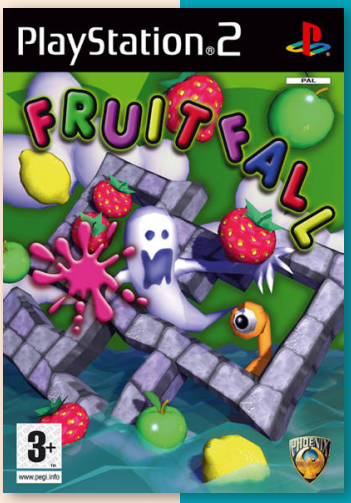
5.6



P

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2007
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1-4 Players

The objective is to make the fruit disappear by moving them around the grid until they are grouped together - fruit must be either above or to the left or right of another fruit, diagonals do not count. The fruit can be moved by rotating the play area and allowing the fruit to fall thereby creating groups of three or more of the same fruit, which will then be removed, a bonus is awarded If more than one group disappears on one turn.



Fu-un Shinsengumi

Developer	Genki
Publisher	Konami, Genki
Release date	(jp) January 22, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

Fu-un Shinsengumi (lit. “Winds and Clouds Shinsengumi”), featuring artwork by Yoji Shinkawa, revolves around the historical military group Shinsengumi during the Edo period of Japan’s history.

Players take the role of Shinsengumi, samurai policemen, who have to protect the lords from the attacks of Tenchu ninjas.

J

Fu-un Bakumatsu-den

8.5

J

Developer	Genki
Publisher	Genki
Release date	(jp) January 20, 2005
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

Unlike the previous game, Fu-un Shinsen Gumi, this time the situation is reversed, where players are assassinating samurais. The missions are to defeat the samurai guards and find and kill the lords.

The game take place from 1860 through 1869. Players join the ranks of the roshi and battle the Shinsengumi who are policemen hired by the Shogunate to keep the peace.

Fukakutei Sekai no Tantei Shinshi: Akugyou Futaasa no Jiken File

8.0

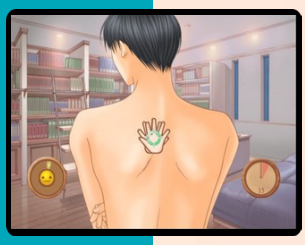
Developer Abel Software
Publisher Abel Software
Release date (jp) January 29, 2009
Genre Adventure
Mode 1 Player

As Agyou Souma, a stoic, brooding detective, players works on four separate (but simultaneous) cases, each of which contains a unique storyline that is independent of the others, and meets a vast array of characters. If he clears all four cases with time to spare, a more complex, fifth case is presented.

J

Full House Kiss

5.0



J

Developer Tenky
Publisher Capcom
Release date (jp) July 22, 2004
Genre Visual novel
Mode 1 Player

Full House Kiss is a shojo manga as well as a PlayStation 2 Otome Game. The manga was created at the same time as the video game, and was drawn by Shiori Yuwa and published in Hana to Yume & The Hana to Yume.

Most of the gameplay is focused on housekeeping tasks. Every day after the player get back from school, they have chores and a finite amount of time to get them done.

Full House Kiss 2

6.0

J

Developer Tenky
Publisher Capcom
Release date (jp) February 23, 2006
Genre Visual novel
Mode 1 Player

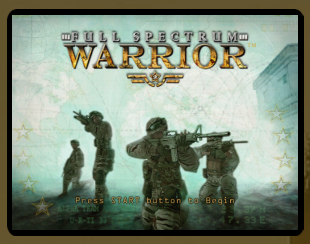
In the second Full House Kiss game, players get to play housekeeper once again in a dormitory full of boys. Similar to the first game, players have to interact with boys, learn their personalities, and pick a guy who might be the one. Along with unfettered interaction sequences, mini-games may also be played which help move the story along and may engender love between the protagonist and a boy.

"psxdatacenter.com"

7.4

J N P

Full Spectrum Warrior



Developer	Pandemic Studios
Publisher	THQ, (jp) Sega, (us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(us) March 21, 2005
Genre	Real-time tactics
Mode	1 (- 2) Players

Full Spectrum Warrior is a real-time tactics videogame. It was developed by the Institute for Creative Technologies in association with Pandemic Studios.

Players take on the role of commander of two squads of the United States military, Alpha and Bravo, as they guide them in the fictional country of Zekistan on a mission to capture or kill the terrorist Al Afad.

The game is a squad-based game in which the player issues commands to two fireteams, Alpha and Bravo. Each fireteam has a Team Leader equipped with an M4 carbine. The Team Leaders also carry a GPS receiver, which can be used to locate mission objectives and enemy locations, and a radio for communication with headquarters. The second team member is the Automatic Rifleman, equipped with an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, used to lay suppressive fire on the enemy and assigned to take command if the team leader is shot. The third team member is the Grenadier, equipped with an M4 with an M203 grenade launcher attachment. The last team member is the Rifleman, equipped with a M4 carbine. If a member of the team is wounded, another member of the team will carry them. Lieutenant Phillips is the team commander and the player will usually find him with the CASEVACs, which are healing and ammunition points. Each fireteam has a limited amount of fragmentation and smoke grenades, in addition to the M203 grenades. Occasionally throughout the game, there will be a third asset designated as Charlie Team, ranging from anti-armor engineers to US Army Rangers.

Throughout the game, the player does not directly control any of the fireteam members; instead, orders are given using a cursor that projects onto the environment, letting players tell their soldiers to hold a position and set a specific zone to cover with fire. It is also possible to order them to lay down suppressive fire on a given zone to cover the second squad's movement, or to reduce incoming fire.

Gameplay revolves around the concept of fire and movement, with one team providing suppressive fire while the other moves.

Full Spectrum Warrior includes a online cooperative mode. In co-op mode, two players are in command of their own fireteam and must work together to accomplish the goals of the level.

In 2000, the U.S. Army's Science & Technology community was curious to learn if commercial gaming platforms could be leveraged for training. Recognizing that a high percentage of incoming recruits had grown up using entertainment software products, there was interest in determining whether software game techniques and technology could complement and enhance established training methods.

Having established a U.S. Army University Affiliated Research Center (the Institute for Creative Technologies – ICT) in 1999 for the purpose of advancing virtual simulation technology, work began in May 2000 on a project entitled C4 under ICT Creative Director James Korris with industry partners Sony Imageworks and their teammate,

Pandemic Studios, represented by co-founders Josh Resnick and Andrew Goldman.

At the time, there was a great deal of interest in leveraging the stability, low cost and computational/rendering power of the new generation of game consoles, chiefly Sony's PlayStation 2 and Microsoft's Xbox, for training applications. Legal restrictions on the PlayStation (using the platform for a military purpose) combined with the default Xbox configuration "persistence" (i.e. missions recorded on the embedded hard drive for after-action review) led to the final selection of the Xbox platform for development.

A commercial release of the game was required for Xbox platform access. The team, however, quickly concluded that a viable entertainment title might differ from a valid training tool. The exaggerated physics of entertainment software titles, it was believed, could produce a negative training effect in the Soldier audience. Accordingly, the team developed two versions of the game. The Army version was accessible through a static unlock code; the entertainment version played normally.

The most radical decision in the game's development was to limit first-person actions to issuing orders and directions to virtual Fire Teams and Squad members. Given the popularity of the first-person shooter genre, it was assumed that all tactical-level military gameplay necessarily involved individual combat action. The application defied conventional wisdom, winning both awards and commercial acceptance. The game's working title evolved to C-Force (2001) and ultimately Full Spectrum Warrior (2003).

As work progressed on Full Spectrum Warrior, ICT developed another real-time tactical decision-making game with Quicksilver Software entitled Full Spectrum Command for the US Army's Infantry Captains Career Course, with the first-person perspective of a Company Commander. As the application was designed to play on a desktop PC (unlike the Xbox), no commercial release was necessary. Full Spectrum Command gave rise to a sequel developed for the US Army and Singapore Armed Forces (version 1.5). A related ICT/Quicksilver title, Full Spectrum Leader, simulates the first person perspective of a Platoon Leader.

Full Spectrum Warrior relates to the Army's program of training soldiers to be flexible and adaptable to a broad range of operational scenarios.

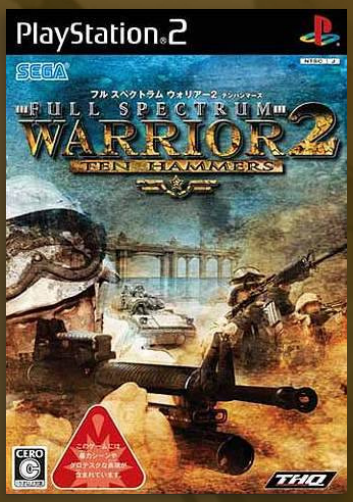
At the Game Critics Awards of E3 2003, Full Spectrum Warrior was awarded "Best Original Game" and "Best Simulation Game." The staff of X-Play nominated Full Spectrum Warrior for their 2004 "Best Strategy Game" award, which ultimately went to Rome: Total War. It was also a runner-up for Computer Games Magazine's 2004 "Best Interface" award, but lost to World of Warcraft.

The Xbox and PC versions received "favorable" reviews, while the PlayStation 2 version received "average" reviews according to Metacritic.

Full Spectrum Warrior became the subject of some controversy shortly after it was released. The two primary complaints aired were that the United States Army was not using their training version of the game because it was not *"realistic enough"*. Secondly, the United States Army had been short-changed. There was some discussion in the press regarding whether the government had either wasted money on the project, or if they had been taken advantage of by Pandemic Studios, and Sony Pictures Imageworks, their partner on the project.

7.1

Full Spectrum Warrior: Ten Hammers



J N P

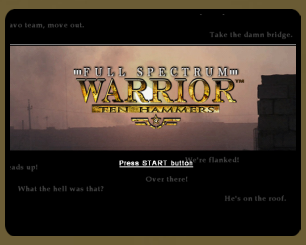
Developer	Pandemic Studios
Publisher	THQ, (jp) Sega
Release date	(us) March 28, 2006
Genre	Real-time tactics
Mode	1 (- 4) Players

After the death of the tyrant of Zekistan in the first game, the situation hasn't improved. A civil war begins to unfold and various insurgencies fight against the Western forces. Even ethnic hostilities erupt in violence. So once again squads of US Light Infantry are send into the country to secure the Tien-Hamir (or "Ten Hammers") Province. But this time they can call upon the assistance of the British elements of the Coalition Forces.

The game features improvements and additions in gameplay. New gameplay mechanics such as splitting up fireteams into groups of two were added. The player is given the ability to position fireteams in interior firing positions that negate an enemy's cover.

The game's multiplayer mode enables players to choose between co-op and coalition vs insurgency forces, and the insurgent commanders have the ability to recruit civilians to their side. Each side can also capture safe houses for reinforcements and field medics. Each fireteam member also had a special attribute. The team leader and rifleman are able to snipe an enemy soldier if a part of his body is shown. The Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) gunner does the suppressing fire while the M203 gunner uses his M203 grenade launcher. Ability to control armored vehicles such as armored personnel carriers (APC) was added. In some missions, the fireteam leaders can call in air strikes with an AH-64 Apache gunship and also control an armored Humvee equipped with a .50 caliber machine gun.

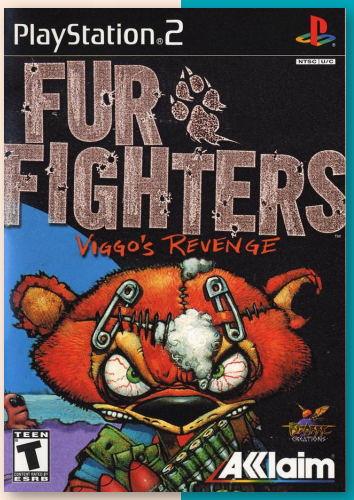
In the game a fireteam usually consists of four soldiers: a team leader (scoped M4 Carbine/ Heckler and Koch HK33), an automatic rifleman (M249 SAW), a grenadier (M4/M203 grenade launcher or an HK33 with an HK79 grenade launcher) and a rifleman (scoped M4 Carbine/ HK33). Their weapons have 2 fire modes: a fire sector and precision fire. In a few missions the player is able to control the M2 Bradley IFV. Also in the player's arsenal are the AK-47, a mounted M2, the M82 Barrett rifle and the SMAW.

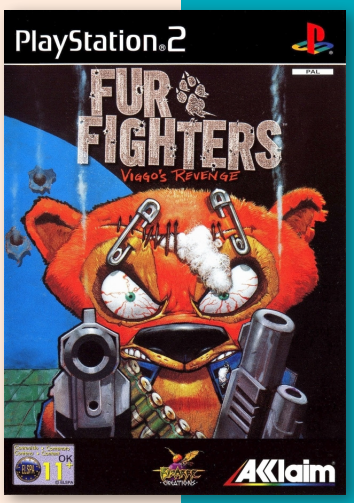


Fur Fighters: Viggo's Revenge

6.4

Developer	Bizarre Creations
Publisher	Acclaim
Release date	(us) June 3, 2001
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1-2 (4) Players





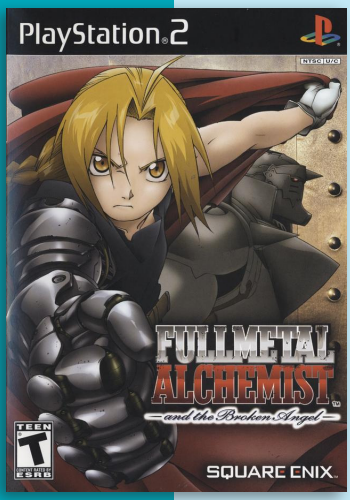
Fur Fighters is a third-person shooter originally released for the Dreamcast in 2000. The updated PlayStation 2 version was released as Fur Fighters: Viggo's Revenge. The game was designed very much as a standard third-person shooter, but used a world populated by cute little animals as its setting. As a result, the game's depiction of violence is very cartoon-like without losing any of its intensity.

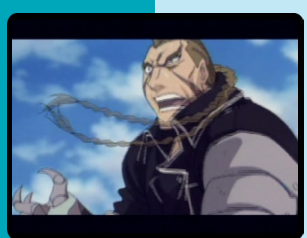
In Fur Fighters, the player's job is to rescue tiny animal babies who have been taken from their parents (in one case, it's the little brother) by the central villain, General Viggo. Viggo has scattered these babies all over the world, requiring the fathers (again, in one case it's the little brother, in another, it's the mother) to explore, confront Viggo's henchmen, and rescue all of them. The gameplay featured many unique aspects for a third-person shooter of the time it was released, most notably making each level an extremely large, expansive area that requires sometimes hours of involved exploration to locate the babies and get rid of the enemies. (Examples include a giant construction site and an entire section of a large city, complete with buildings to explore, including a complete museum of modern art.) Maneuvering through these levels often requires careful observation of the environment so as not to get lost, as well as solving puzzles to figure out where some babies might be hidden or how to gain access to more of the level. Unlike most action games of this type, Fur Fighters distinguishes itself by featuring a system where the player can, at many intervals on a level, switch between one of many animal parents. Each parent has their own advantages and disadvantages, with many having special abilities allowing them to do certain things easier. This substitute system also makes it easier for players who are low on hit points or ammunition to switch to a more suitable character.

While the game was not a tremendous financial success and went almost unnoticed by the majority of gamers at the time, critically the game was almost universally praised for its size, scope, sense of humour, and attention to detail.

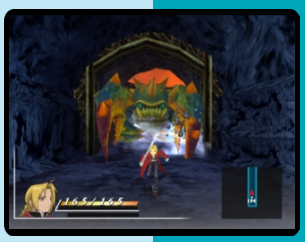
5.6

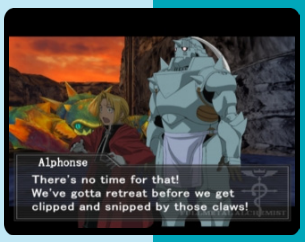
Fullmetal Alchemist and the Broken Angel





Developer	Racjin
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) December 25, 2003
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1 Player





Fullmetal Alchemist and the Broken Angel features an original story by Hiromu Arakawa from the creator of the Fullmetal Alchemist manga.

The game follows both protagonists of the series: Edward Elric and his younger brother, Alphonse, as their explore lands full of giant creatures known as chimeras as well as thieves. Once meeting a girl named Armony, the two brothers start learning where the chimeras come from. The player primarily controls Edward, an alchemist who can transform objects from the game's stages into weapons to defeat his enemies. Additionally, he can receive support by Alphonse's AI in order to fight multiple enemies.

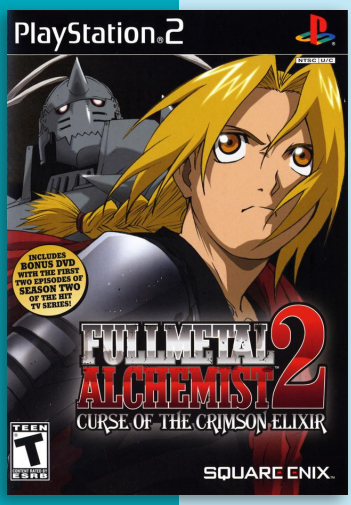
Broken Angel is an action role-playing game, which is similar to that of a 3D beat-em-up. The player takes control of Edward Elric. Besides using his metallic arm as a sword, he is also able to transmute weapons to enhance attack power. Thanks to this, he can attack enemies he cannot reach and utilize defense. Players are able to equip Ed and Al with various accessories that can either enhance or hinder their performance. Alphonse is the computer controlled, though the player can summon him to aid Edward by pressing and holding the R1 button. Alphonse can also be given weapons by Edward in order to enhance them. When Alphonse's health is depleted, Edward can restore him by using alchemy in his armor. However, once Edward loses all his health, the game is over.

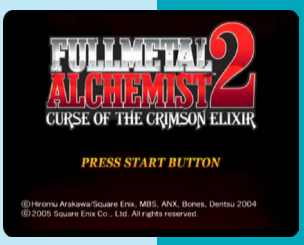
The game also carries RPG elements such as leveling up by winning enough experience when defeating enemies. Enemies' attacks can also affect the player's commands with items he picks up across the stages and activate them while opening the menu.

Despite good sales in Japan, critical reception to the game has been largely negative. Critics have been divided on the game's graphics and gameplay. However, the story has also received praise for the cast's characterization while other reviewers found it easy to predict the outcomes.

Fullmetal Alchemist 2: Curse of the Crimson Elixir

6.7





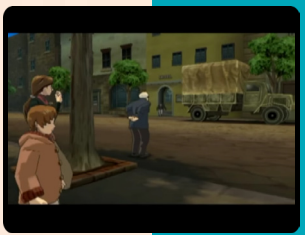
Developer	Racjin
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) September 22, 2004
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Fullmetal Alchemist 2: Curse of the Crimson Elixir is the prequel of sorts to Fullmetal Alchemist and the Broken Angel. The game has much improved visuals than the previous title, as well as all dialog being voiced over. To help boost sales, Square Enix decided to release the game with a bonus DVD in the United States containing the second and third episodes of season two of the Fullmetal Alchemist anime series, since the show took a four-month break in its Adult Swim broadcast. This DVD contains only English audio.

In his review of the August 2005 Newtype USA Game of the Month Kevin Gifford writes *"For Broken Angel veterans, the improvements here will likely be incremental."* and that *"If there's anything to complain about with Curse, it's the slow buildup."*

Fullmetal Alchemist 3: Kami o Tsugu Shoujo

8.0



Developer	Racjin
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) July 21, 2005
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1-2 Players

Fullmetal Alchemist 3: Kami o Tsugu Shōjo is the third role-playing video game continuation of the series of Square Enix games.

The game features Tag Battle Mode, unlocking characters such as Roy Mustang, Riza Hawkeye, and Alex Louis Armstrong. In this mode, players must defeat all of the opponents to gain a record.

Unlike the previous two installations, Fullmetal Alchemist 3 features a two player game. The player can switch between Edward and Alphonse and play either one of them at any point in the game. In tag battle mode, the same applies to all characters.

Gallery has about 96 unlockable images, and 10 movie clips, a music video and a commercial.

7.0

Fullmetal Alchemist: Dream Carnival

Developer	Eighting, Raizing
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) August 26, 2004
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Fullmetal Alchemist: Dream Carnival is a cel-shaded fighting game. The game's story involves a fighting tournament during a large festival that allows for any pair of fighters to participate. The participants are allowed to use weapons and alchemical skills. The fighting involves the two versus two style of game playing.

J

FunkMaster Flex's Digital Hitz Factory

7.1

Developer	Jester Interactive
Publisher	Jester Interactive, (us) Jack of All Games
Release date	(eu) May 30, 2003
Genre	Miscellaneous
Mode	1-2 Players

Funkmaster Flex Digital Hitz Factory is a music editor game using over 16,000 different instrument sounds as well as different music styles such as hip hop, garage indy, heavy metal, pop music among others to create new music. Players can also use over 500 different video clips along with different effects and use a USB microphone packaged with the game.

N P

7.0

Furasera

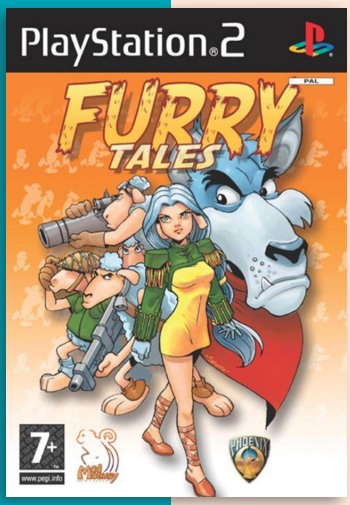
Developer	Datam Polystar
Publisher	Datam Polystar
Release date	(jp) February 26, 2004
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Players take on the role of So-ya Kon, and interact with a range of ladies, including 20-year-old Courier Annaporal, buxom 18-year-old Ensor Maretta, the clone Ichi no A, Konica Provia, and Moore Katuki. With five different romantic interests to pursue, the game leads to a total of 10 different endings. There are also several different minigames available, including a fishing game, a golf game, and a "battle shogi" board game.

J

Furry Tales

4.3



Developer	Mad Monkey
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) October 22, 2004
Genre	Real-time strategy
Mode	1-2 Players

Furry Tales was developed by Mad Monkey Studios and published by Phoenix Games Ltd. for the PS2. It is a 3D action-RTS where sheep and wolves battle for survival and status of their species. Gameplay includes a tutorial mode to learn the principles of strategy, an ongoing set of story sequences that set up each battle, and a 2-player co-op multiplayer mode.

P

Fushigi no Kuni no Alice

7.8

J

Developer	Global A
Publisher	Global A
Release date	(jp) June 12, 2003
Genre	Board
Mode	1-4 Players

Fushigi no kuni no Alice (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland) is a board game based on the 1865 Alice in Wonderland novel and uses the illustration of the original novel illustrator John Tenniel.

Game modes include; Story Mode: Players go through the story divided into different chapters. Vs Mode: Players against players. Challenge Mode: Players play a challenging 1 player game in any of the game's 21 chapters.

Fushigi no Umi no Nadia: Inherit the Blue Water

6.7

Developer	Jinx
Publisher	Jinx
Release date	(jp) September 22, 2005
Genre	Adventure, Simulation
Mode	1 Player

The game, based on Nadia - The Secret of Blue Water anime, is part interactive adventure and submarine action game. The action portion of the game is viewed from an overhead perspective where the sub is represented by a little icon which surges through a grid-based ocean. Four options are available to the submarine crew during battle: Attack/Repair/Info/Electora.

J

8.4

Fushigi Yuugi Genbu Kaiden Gaiden -Kagami no Miko-

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) June 23, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

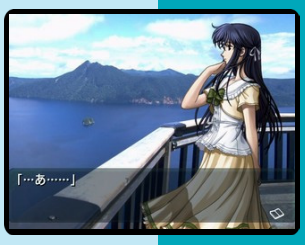
Fushigi Yuugi Genbu Kaiden Gaiden: Kagami no Miko, based on the manga written by Yuu Watase, puts players in the shoes of Mariko Kobayashi, an original character created for the game, who is taken into the Universe of the Four Gods through a mirror. While searching for her friend, Takumi Mochizuki, Mariko is aided in her quest by Genbu no Miko and the Genbu Seven.

Fuuraiki

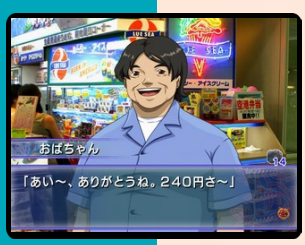
5.8

Developer	Fog
Publisher	Fog
Release date	(jp) September 28, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Fuuraiki is a romantic visual novel which utilized real-life photo locations with anime style 2D character over it, made as a part of an actual photo during CG event scenes. The story takes place in Hokkaido, Japan. The player takes on a role of a photographer who comes to visit Hokkaido and take photos of various places. On his voyage he meet various women with whom he can get entangled in a romantic relationship.



Fuuraiki 2

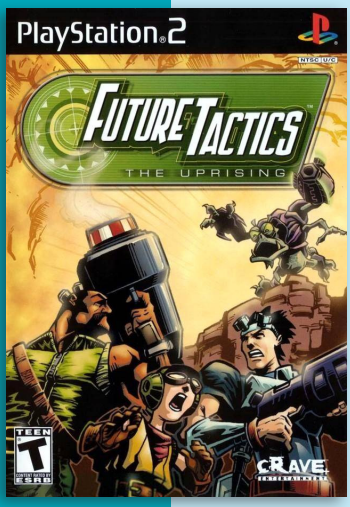


Developer	Fog
Publisher	Fog
Release date	(jp) November 10, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

While the first game focused on western island of Japan, known as Hokkaido, this game takes place on the southern island of Okinawa. The player takes on a role of a reporter who travel the island of Okinawa, visiting around a hundred different locations and meeting various girls on his journey. The game works like a typical visual novel adventure game with dialogue windows and character over background images.

Future Tactics: The Uprising

6.1

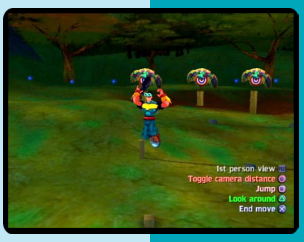


Developer	Warthog
Publisher	Crave
Release date	(us) May 10, 2004
Genre	Tactical shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

Future Tactics: The Uprising is a turn based tactical shooter. Once known as Pillage, this colourful turn based shooter was stuck in development for a number of years before being picked up by Crave for a US release, followed shortly by JoWood for a European release. It plays a lot like the Worms 3D games and has a story penned by Paul Rose. The game features a geo-mod system in which almost anything can be destroyed, leaving battlefields scarred by craters.

The plot of the game revolves around Low, his sister Pepper, and any other survivors they can find, trying to rid the world of the mysterious and malevolent "creatures" that are slowly taking over the planet.

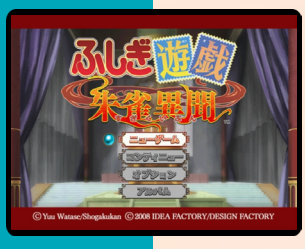
Gameplay always involves a set of two teams. One team moves all its players, and then the other. The characters fire by aiming at a target and then matching two lines for the precise firing zone. Depending on the upgrades received, the player characters may also zoom in or add an extra boost of power before firing. Firing can destroy parts of the environment, which is one of the selling points of the game. Character progression is based on experience attained from killing enemies, or finding hidden items in the environment.



N P

Fushigi Yuugi: Suzaku Ibun

8.4



J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) May 29, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Fushigi Yuugi - Suzaku Ibun is a visual novel based on the manga written by Yuu Watase. The game, though having most of the characters from the original series included, has apparently replaced Miaka and Yui.

The limited edition includes booklet of full color illustrations plus over 70 pages of brand new illustrations only found here. There is also a drama CD called Suzaku Shichi Seishi Hen.

FUTURAMA-RAMA!

by: PSW (AU) October 2003 #13

NEW DETAILS ON FUTURAMA, THE GAME THAT'S RARING TO TWEAK YOUR PRIMITIVE HUMAN LAUGH ORGANS

Although the excellent telly show lies mouldering in the cathode-ray graveyard, *Futurama* still exists in the parallel world of videogames. It's a forthcoming action title that blends platform elements with a smidgen of fighting and the odd puzzle to solve, and we've unearthed new factoids to tease you with.

When the evil tycoon known only as Mom gains a controlling share in planet Earth, it's up to Bender, Fry and Leela to stop her. The japery takes place in New New York, the ruins of Old New York and a robot infested asteroid belt, among other places even more far-out. Fans of Bender will be relieved to learn that kicking and punching also have their place in the future. All the stars are back to do the voice-over, and we managed to have a few words with the show's legendary producer for more info.

YAK TO THE FUTURE

WE INTERVIED THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OF FUTURAMA DAVID X COHEN

What exactly was your involvement with the game?
I was the voice director. We had decided early on that we really wanted to make sure the game stuck close to the tone of the series. There's such a big danger that if you farm it out to third parties they'll just make any kind of generic game and plant the word Futurama on it. We really take a lot of pride in the details of the show, so we wanted to keep it close to home. We had the real cast doing the voices. I think people will find that when they get the game they'll also get a free episode of the show.

You worked on *The Simpsons* before moving over to *Futurama*. You went from being a writer to taking charge of production. Which was your favourite show to work on?
It's a totally different experience actually. There's no question that *Futurama*'s the one closest to my heart. At the same time, writing for *The Simpsons* was a far easier job. It was more relaxing working on *The Simpsons*, because it's a well-oiled machine at this point: everyone knows what they're doing and you just have to keep the gears churning. With *Futurama* we were just making it up as we went along.

Working on a game is obviously very different to working on an animated episode. How have you found working with a different type of media?
What will make the game good is exactly what made the show good: it's funny, exciting and there are goals for characters you care about. It's just that here you can accomplish them instead of them just happening on their own. There was actually quite a bit of similarity I think, especially as we were trying to keep the tone so close to the show.

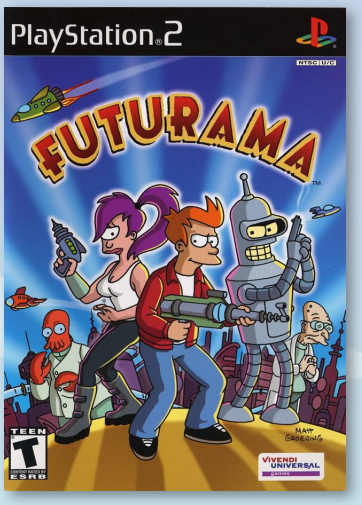
Considering the show's coming to a close, what are your future plans? Are you going to stay with the team or move on?
I think a lot about moving into feature films, animated feature films especially. I think we gained a lot of know-how producing many hours of animation every year for TV with great efficiency. You have to do it that way to make sure you get it done in time, and I think a lot of those techniques would be very useful to the feature animation industry where there's noticeable lack of efficiency if you look at the budgets. Of course, the number one thing I'd like to do is a *Futurama* feature film, but there are a lot of people that have to be convinced.

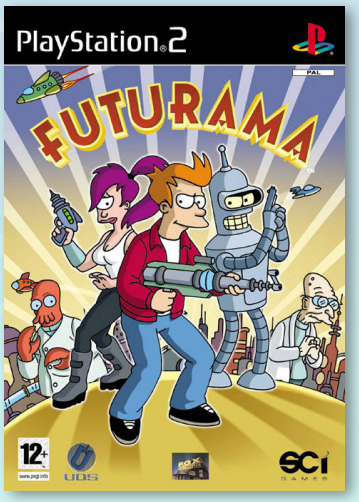
Obviously the character set is about as far removed from *The Simpsons* as it possible can be. Was that an intentional thing?
Yes, very much so. Our fear, and that of the network, was that we would be seen as ripping off *The Simpsons*. Obviously, the setting is the first change, but beyond that we put the characters in the workplace instead of making them a family, and we tried to keep the ages of the characters mostly between the ages of the kids and the parents of *The Simpsons* so we could cover more in terms of dating and romance and the other things that are very hard to cover in *The Simpsons*. It was very much an attempt to keep it away from there.

Futurama

5.9

Developer	UDS
Publisher	SCi, (us) Vivendi Universal Games
Release date	(eu) August 1, 2003
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player





Futurama: The Video Game is a 3D platformer based on the science fiction animated series of the same name.

In the game, Mom has bought Planet Express Deliveries from Professor Farnsworth and has gained control over planet earth. It's up to the player's crew Fry, Leela, Dr. Zoidberg, and Bender, to stop her evil plans.

Gameplay is a mix of shooting and platforming. As the game progresses, players play as each of four characters: Fry, Bender, Leela and Zoidberg. Fry's levels mostly involve shooter mechanics, as he can use a multitude of guns. Bender's levels are platformer-oriented, while Leela's revolve around hand-to-hand combat. Zoidberg is featured in a short segment as well. There are several Nibblers hidden in each level; collecting them unlocks extras such as movie clips and galleries.

Development on the game started before the series' cancellation, but the game wasn't released until after the last episode of season 4 had already been shown. Thus, the game has been known as a "lost episode" of sorts since it includes 28 minutes of new animation.

Many of the crew from the Futurama series worked on the game. Matt Groening served as Executive game developer and David X. Cohen directed the voice actors. These voice actors were the original actors from the series: Billy West, Katey Sagal, John DiMaggio, Tress MacNeille, Maurice LaMarche, and David Herman. Cast members Phil LaMarr and Lauren Tom weren't included in the game due to budgetary reasons. Also adding to the authenticity of the game was the original music composition provided by Christopher Tyng who also composed the music in the series and Futurama scriptwriter and producer J. Stewart Burns who scripted an original storyline for the plot. The music during the end credits of the game is later used in the four straight-to-DVD Futurama films; in the extended intro of Bender's Big Score, and rearranged versions during the end credits of the subsequent three films.

7.0

Futakoi

J

Developer	Alpha Unit
Publisher	Media Works
Release date	(jp) December 9, 2004
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Futakoi is a “conversation” game that features over six pairs of twins. The objective is to bond with twins via what the developer calls a “twin view mode.” Players use a multiple choice system to have conversations with the girls and try to keep a perfect balance at all times. The game also introduces the “love junction system” - which is basically just a another term for branching storylines.

“psxdatacenter.com”

Futakoi Alternative

8.0

Developer	Marvelous Entertainment
Publisher	Marvelous Entertainment
Release date	(jp) June 23, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

J

Futakoi Alternative is an alternate version based on the original Futakoi anime and video game. While some characters are recurring, the setting and everything is completely different, like an alternate version of the overall story.

Unlike most of static visual novels, the game includes a couple of quick-time modes during the adventure part of the game where players have to press the right button before the time runs out.

8.0

Futakoi: Koi to Mizugi no Survival

J

Developer	Alpha Unit
Publisher	Media Works
Release date	(jp) August 25, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The second Futakoi game from Media Works, is set on a deserted island and has the player thrown into a quest for survival on the island during the middle of summer. Joining him are six pairs of twins. The new Free Character Costume System allows players to dress the 12 girls up in different clothes and send them out on expeditions throughout the island.

Fuuun Super Combo

7.3

NeoGeo Online Collection the Best

Developer	SNK Playmore
Publisher	SNK Playmore
Release date	(jp) June 21, 2007
Genre	Compilation, Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

This is a compilation of the two games in the Savage Reign / Fu'un series: Savage Reign and Kizuna Encounter: Super Tag Battle. The compilation also includes a color edit mode, arrange music, as well as online versus play.

Savage Reign (1995):
Savage Reign is a one-on-one 2D fighter in which players select a character and try to defeat all challengers using the basic attacks and special moves. The game features 2 different horizontal planes to which the characters can freely jump to in order to avoid attacks a la Fatal Fury. Players cannot escape completely however, as all characters have a throwing weapon they can use in different ways to reach each other no matter where they are.

Kizuna Encounter: Super Tag Battle (1996):
Kizuna Encounter is the sequel to Savage Reign. As the original, the game plays as a 2D side-scrolling fighting game, in which players select a characters and fight all opponents in two-round fights for ultimate supremacy. The sequel removes the different horizontal planes of the original and thus the ranged combat is somewhat restrained, but Kizuna Encounter adds tag-teaming to the gameplay mechanics. Instead of choosing one fighter, players select a team of two and can switch between each character at any time.

J

Futari no Fantavision

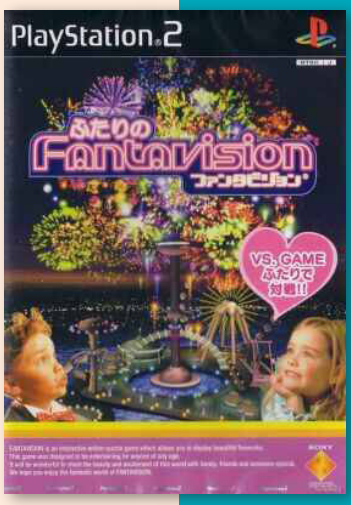
7.0

J

Developer	SCEJ
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) July 4, 2002
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1-2 Players

Futari no Fantavision is an update to Fantavision. While the gameplay largely remains the same, the developers changed some rules, included item upgrades, and a new battle dynamicse. In addition to the versus battles, this Japanese special release also adds a changed single-player mode, new fireworks effects, better graphics, and a completely remixed soundtrack.

"psxdatacenter.com"



PS2
PlayStation.2

Disney's G-Force

5.6

N P

Developer	Eurocom Entertainment Software
Publisher	Disney Interactive Studios
Release date	(us) July 21, 2009
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

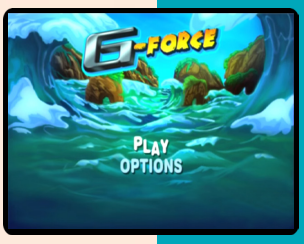
G-Force is a licensed game based on the movie of the same name. The player takes the control of Darwin who is a member of a secret government organization consisting of guinea pigs. Home appliances are the main foes in this game. Darwin can use various guns and gadgets, e.g. a jet pack, a electronic whip or a grappling hook, to dispatch of them. Most of the time is spent in fights but there are also puzzles.

G-Force

6.0

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) October 6, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	xxx

G-Force is a water skiing game. The game consists of three play modes. Practice, Race - a points based mode where players compete against AI based on the point value of the tricks they land, and Championship. Where levels must be completed by getting a minimum point score to unlock the next course. Making the players journey harder is the large amount of detritus to avoid in the rivers, from floating logs to harsh riverbanks.



P

G-Saviour

7.4

J

Developer	Atelier-Sai
Publisher	Sunrise Interactive
Release date	(jp) September 14, 2000
Genre	Action, third-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

G-Saviour, released to promote the upcoming release of the film of the same name, takes place after the events of the movie. It stars Reed Fox, a pilot of the Illuminati's Lightning Squad.

The game plays like an third person shooter with a lot of emphasis on locking and thrusting.

"gundam.wikia.com"

G-Taste Mahjong

7.5

Developer	X-Nauts
Publisher	Psikyo
Release date	(jp) April 24, 2003
Genre	Board
Mode	1 Player

G-Taste Mahjong is a Playstation 2 port of the arcade machine by Psikyo, first released in 2002. Featuring 16 anime characters from Japanese bi-weekly publication Young Magazine Uppers, G-Taste pits mahjong players against big breasted cartoon women.

The limited edition of G-Taste Mahjong includes a busty bonus figure and ships in larger than normal packaging.

J

G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra

5.0

N P

Developer	Double Helix Games
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) August 4, 2009
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra is based off of the 2009 movie, but features a new storyline that differs from the movie where an elite group of soldiers must fight against Cobra Commander and stop his organization known as Cobra from taking over the world.

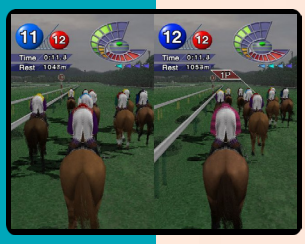
The gameplay is similar to Neo Contra with a behind the back view where the player uses a variety of weapons including machine guns and rocket launchers and the Delta 6 Accelerator Suit that makes the player invulnerable for a short period of time. Using these weapons and accessories the player must fight his way through a horde of enemies including soldiers, tanks and jet fighters, along with the standard end of level bosses.

The player can choose from 12 different Joes, but only a certain set at the beginning and unlocking more for completing missions, each with their own weapon and strengths depending upon their rank, along with using various vehicles scattered throughout the stages. The game also features a two-player drop-in/drop-out co-op option that allows a friend to join a game at any time, however during gameplay without a human ally, the computer's A.I. will take over for the second on-screen soldier.

"mobygames.com"

G1 Jockey

7.9

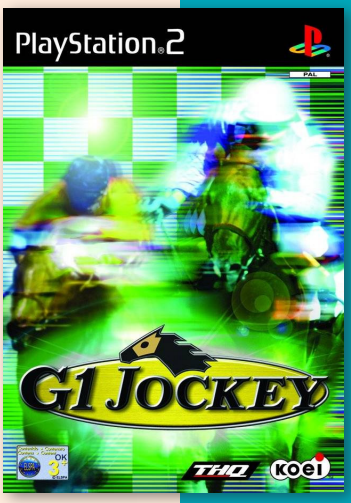


J P

Developer	Koei, Inis
Publisher	Koei, (eu) THQ
Release date	(jp) March 22, 2001
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

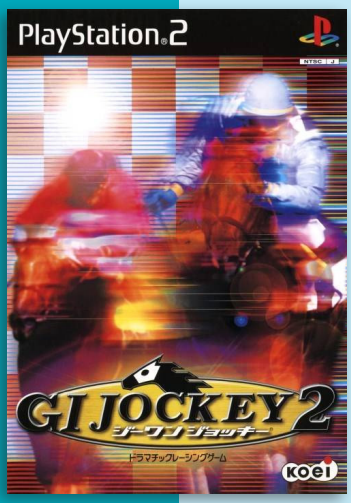
G1 Jockey is a horse racing game with two game modes, a single player story mode and a multi-player trial mode in which players compete in random races without the career progression.

In story/career mode the player starts as a novice jockey alongside two other AI jockeys and joins a stable. Each week they bid to take part in races aiming to end the year with the Rookie Of The Year contest.



G1 Jockey 2

8.0



Developer	Koei, Inis
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) November 2, 2000
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

G1 Jockey 2 was the first game for the Playstation 2 and the second one in the long series that still are in development. As in other G1 Jockey games, the players take the role of a rookie who aspires to become a Grade 1 Class ("G1") jockey.

The game features 50 real jockeys and over 5000 different horses.

J

G1 Jockey 3

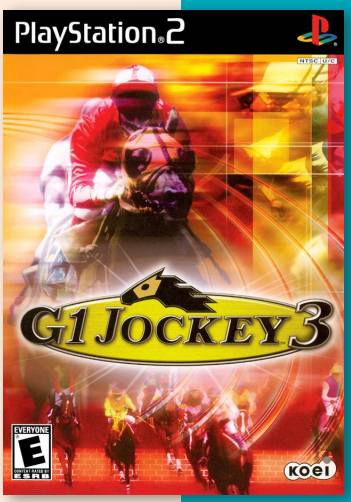
7.1

J N P

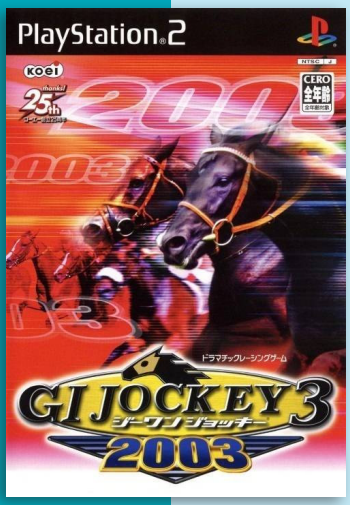
Developer	Koei, Inis
Publisher	Koei, (eu) THQ
Release date	(jp) December 21, 2002
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Although the G1 Jockey series had been gaining popularity in Japan, this was the first game in the series to be released in North America. In contrast to Tecmo's Gallop Racer series, which focuses on every aspect of horse racing (including breeding), G1 Jockey 3 focuses solely on the jockey.

The game features a large roster of horses, and many tracks to choose from, including flat track and steeplechase races.



G1 Jockey 3 2003



Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) October 30, 2003
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

G1 Jockey 3 2003 is more of a expansion pack than a sequel. The game includes race horse information from 2003.

In addition to incorporating the 2003 data for the horse race in 2003, new jockeys also appear in the game.

J

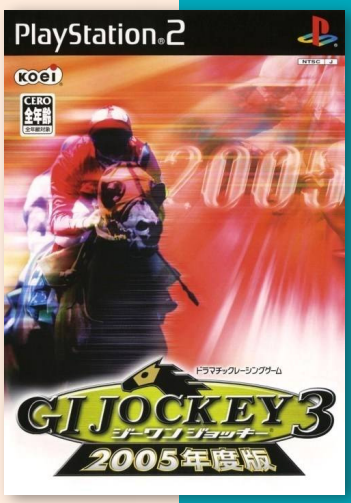
G1 Jockey 3 2005 Nendoban

J

Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) February 24, 2005
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

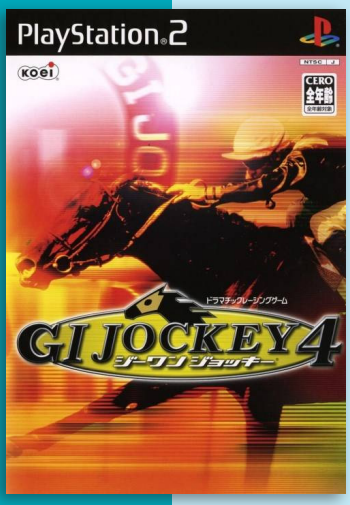
G1 Jockey 3 2005 Nendoban include the latest version of the 2005 racing program. It includes the 3 year old horse data of 2004 and the latest record of the horse, realizing real race development.

In the game, more than 100 jockeys who was active in central horse racing/regional horse racing and about 6,000 old and present appeared in full name.



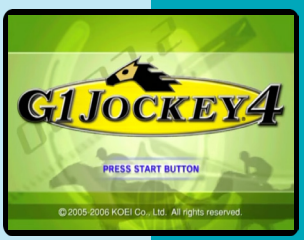
G1 Jockey 4

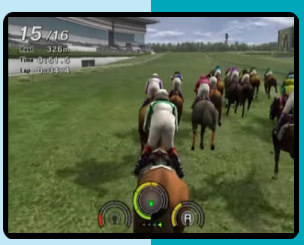
8.5



Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei, (au) THQ, (eu) Koei Tecmo Games
Release date	(jp) December 22, 2005
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

This fourth game in the popular series introduces a new ranking system and abilities, as well a new analogue control system. Other new additions are the ability to breed and rear the own horse each year. G1 Jockey 4's new breeding system is comparatively simple ' this makes it more easier to use.





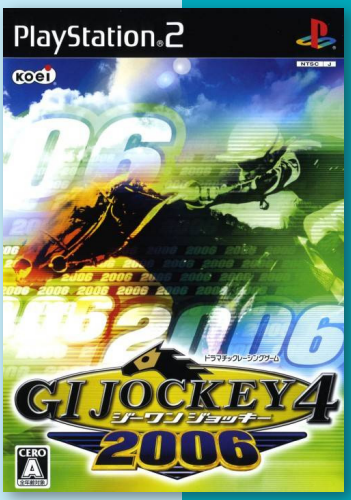
J P

G1 Jockey 4 2006

8.0

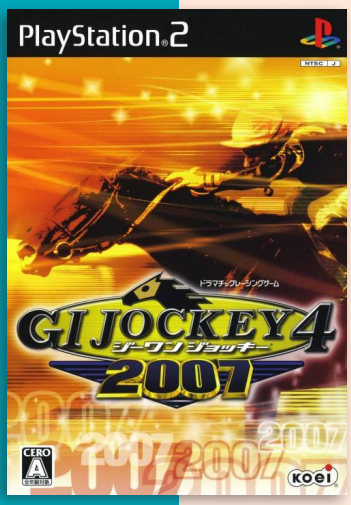
Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) September 14, 2006
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

The 2006 version of G1 Jockey 4 include changes such as the establishment of Victoria Mile, updated race data from 2006. Also added are 3 year old horse data for 2006, such as Meisho Samsung and Kistohenven. The game also feature horse data that reflected the 2006 results.



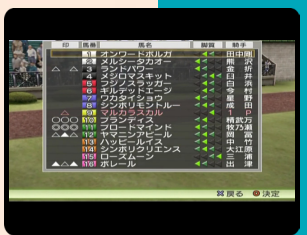
G1 Jockey 4 2007

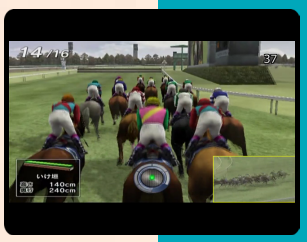
6.8



Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) November 1, 2007
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

The 2007 update of G1 Jockey 4 add a new challenge mode including the original mode. Players can earn high scores by clearing different conditions set for each race, such as “do not collide with other horse” or “win over 1 horse or more.” Players can also obtain racehorse cards for the points they have earned on a race.





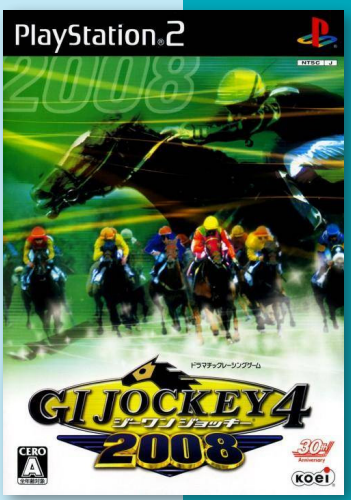
G1 Jockey 4 2008

7.2

Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) September 18, 2008
Genre	Racing, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

G1 Jockey 4 2008 features all the data and names of the 2008 season and a new Legend Mode. Legend mode recreate classic races and offer “what if” scenarios.

The game was also released on PlayStation 3, where players could download additional data and “6 axis” support.



Gacharoku

9.0

Developer	Agenda
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) December 5, 2002
Genre	Board
Mode	1-4 Players

Gacharoku is a sugoroku board game that takes players throughout the country of Japan. The game feature mini-game action for up to four players. The characters and art style is based on Ore No Ryouri, a Japanese restaurant management simulator for PlayStation.

Game modes include: Story Mode, 1 Player Mini Game Mode, and Party - Mini Game Mode.

"psxdatacenter.com"

J

Gacharoku 2: Kondo wa Sekai Isshuu yo!!

J

Developer	Agenda
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2003
Genre	Board
Mode	1-4 Players

The second Gacharoku game for PlayStation 2 take players on a trip around the world. Like its predecessor, gameplay is based on Japanese Sugoroku board game rules, with more than 70 different mini-games.

Game modes include: Free Mode, Story Mode, 1 Player Mini Game Mode, and Party - Mini Game Mode.

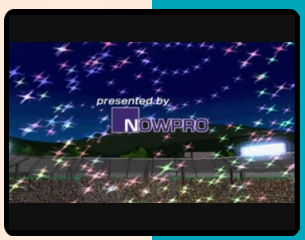
Gachinko Pro Yakyuu

8.2

Developer	Now Production
Publisher	Now Production
Release date	(jp) August 7, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Unlike Real Sports Pro Baseball, Gachinko Pro Baseball is more of a management simulation where the player adopts the role of owner, trader, cheerleader and dominant force in the club. Batting and pitching is handled by the tapping of buttons. Running commentary during a game helps to relay the details of the action as each pitch, pop-up and strike out is rattled off.

"psxdatacenter.com"



J

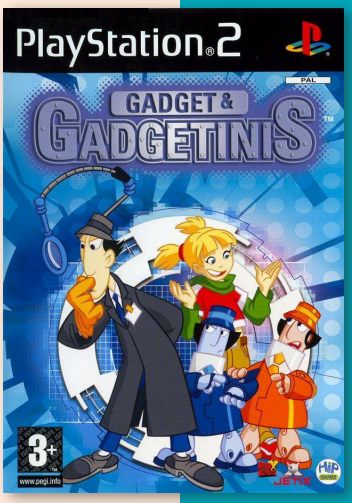
Gadget & the Gadgetinis

8.0

Developer	EKO Software
Publisher	Hip Games
Release date	(eu) November 5, 2004
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

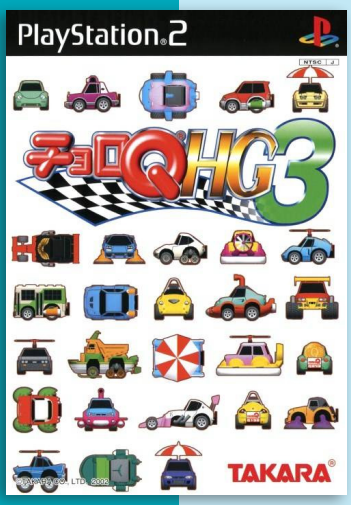
Gadget & the Gadgetinis is a 3D platform game played from a behind view perspective. Gameplay includes platforming with Inspector Gadget and defeating various enemies. The game offers more than twelve gadgets and four levels. These are Las Vegas, China, WOMP headquarters and MAD's base. Sometimes the player take control of one of the Gadgetinis and have to shoot at enemies.

"mobygames.com"



Gadget Racers

7.1



Developer	Takara
Publisher	Takara, (eu) Zoo Digital Publishing, (jp) Atlus
Release date	(jp) December 12, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Choro-Q HG 3, released as Gadget Racers in Europe, is a role-playing, racing game for the PS2. It is the sequel to Choro-Q HG 2. It was also slated to be published in North America by Conspiracy Entertainment under the title Road Trip Adventure Avenue but it was cancelled for unknown reasons.

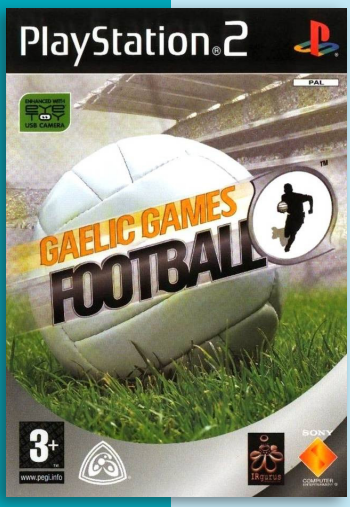
Gadget Racers is very similar to Choro-Q HG 2 with many very similar elements in both racing and some open world exploration but there are new things that the player can perform. There are three types of race courses: there are short, middle and long. The player's main goal is to become the legendary meister and there are several races to complete before becoming the meister, each race contains a flag after the player wins or completes the race. The player goes around to four towns to do biddings and other sorts of things from the inhabitants that needs help with. There are a few mini-games such as Rental Courses, Drag Racing and also Football Regulation. Players also acquire car bodies after they win a race, the reward for collecting all bodies are the Devil Tyres.

The game should not be confused with the US release of Penny Racers, which shares the title with the EU version of this game.

"choroq.wikia.com"

Gaelic Games: Football

5.0



Developer	IR Gurus
Publisher	SCEE
Release date	(eu) November 11, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Gaelic football is a popular sport in Ireland. It's similar to soccer in so far as the player got a goalie on each end, but it also has similarities with basketball since players can lift the ball off the ground with their hands, hand pass etc.

The game itself has sponsorship from the Gaelic Athletes Association who owns all the rights to the team names and stadiums etc.

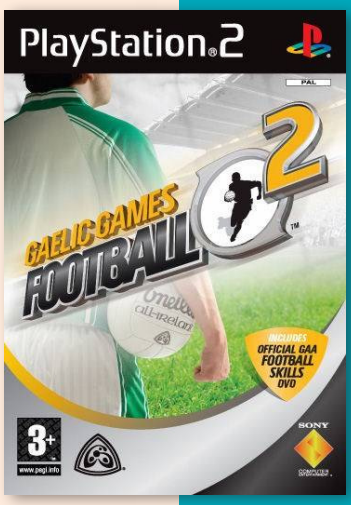
P

Gaelic Games: Football 2

4.6

P

Developer	IR Gurus
Publisher	SCEE
Release date	(eu) August 17, 2007
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

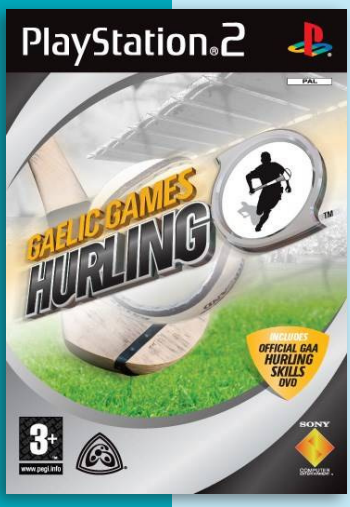


Gaelic Games: Football 2, the officially licensed game of the Gaelic Athletic Assocation, includes all 32 County teams, over 300 Club teams, and 12 major stadiums. The jerseys and stadia are authentic, but as it does not carry the GPA license, the players' names and faces are not.

The game also includes support for the Cameo EyeToy and Digimask that allows a player to put their head into the game on one of the players.

Gaelic Games: Hurling

3.3



Developer	IR Gurus
Publisher	SCEE
Release date	(jp) November 30, 2007
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Gaelic Games: Hurling is the officially licensed game of the Gaelic Athletic Association. Hurling is a fast-paced Gaelic sport that is played with sticks (the hurley) and a ball (the sliotar).

The game includes all 32 County teams, over 300 Club teams, and 12 major stadiums.

The game also came with the Official GAA Hurling / Football skills DVD.

P

8.4

Gaika no Gouhou

Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) August 28, 2003
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

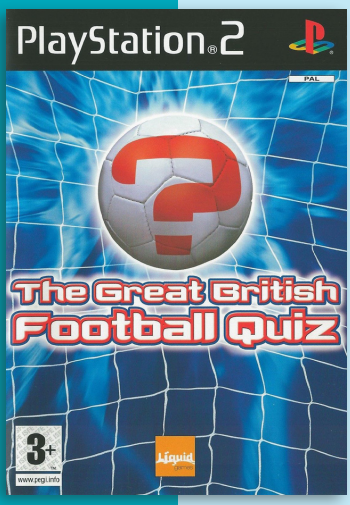
Gaika no Gouhou: Air Land Force is a turn-based strategy game, based in modern day Japan and with post-1980s military hardware.

The game feature an alternate time line where, in 1945, the USA didn't nuke the Japanese. Instead, in autumn 1945, WWII in the Pacific TOP ended when the Allied and the Soviet Union forces landed on mainland Japan.

J

The Great British Football Quiz

3.5



Developer	Liquid Games
Publisher	Liquid Games
Release date	(eu) October 7, 2005
Genre	Trivia
Mode	1-4 Players

The Great British Football Quiz is a football trivia game for up to four players. It contains four different game modes: Top of the League, Play or Pass, Shootout and Football Crazy.

The game includes thousands of questions spanning both world cup, international, European and domestic competitions. For each question the player gets four alternatives to choose from.

"mobygames.com"

P

7.3

Gakkou o Tsukurou!! Happy Days

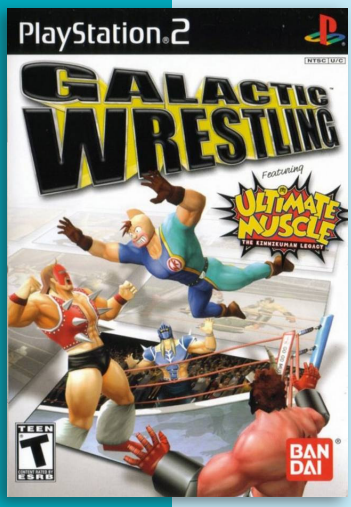
Developer	Marvelous Entertainment
Publisher	Marvelous
Release date	(jp) March 24, 2005
Genre	Simulation
Mode	1 Player

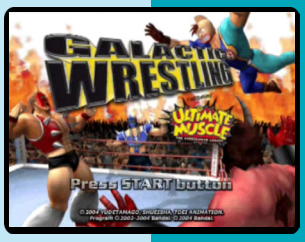
Gakkou o Tsukurou!! Happy Days: Is the first game in the series. This simulation titles makes players the principal of a school, placing them in charge of management and renovating the school grounds. Players get to decide everything, including the creation of your campus and even the rules of the school. Communication with the students is also important to build a strong environment.

J

Galactic Wrestling: Featuring Ultimate Muscle

6.1





Developer	Aki Corp.
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) April 22, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

GWfUM is a wrestling/fighting game developed by the same development team that did Def Jam Vendetta. There are 45 different characters based on the Fox Channels "Ultimate Muscle" TV show, each with their own unique features and finishing moves. There are several locations to wrestle in along with six different modes including one on one exhibition, tag team, and battle royal.

J N

The Great Escape

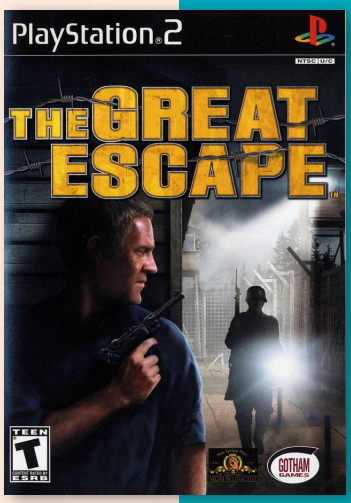
5.7

J N P

Developer	Pivotal Games
Publisher	Gotham Games, (eu) SCi, (jp) Marvelous Ent.
Release date	(us) July 23, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

The Great Escape is an action-adventure stealth game based on the 1963 movie of the same name.

There are four playable characters in the game each with a special ability. They include MacDonald, who can speak German to pass himself off as a guard; Hendley, who can pick pockets to get papers, keys, etc.; Hilts, who can pick locks to get into buildings; and Sedgwick, who can fix mechanical devices. Captain "Virgil" Hilts is American with an attitude. Hendley is an American who joined the RAF Eagle Squadron before the US joined the war. The other characters are citizens of Great Britain or the British Empire: MacDonald is Scottish and Sedgwick is Australian. There are 18 levels in the game, most of which have fictional tasks and attacks, most of which did not happen in the movie. The plot-line follows that of the film of the same name, except there are also levels featuring some of the characters first captures and early escape attempts, as well as a changed ending where all four playable characters escape in the end, whereas in the film, only Sedgwick escapes, Hendley and Hilts are recaptured, and MacDonald is executed. Also, despite the cover showing Hilts with a gun hiding from a guard in the camp, this never occurs in the game or film.



GETTING AWAY WITH IT

by: George Walter@PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) 2002 August #05

Photographing 70 square miles of London for gangster sim *The Getaway* was just the first challenge for TeamSoHo. The second was to actually make a game of it. And the third was make people believe it was real...

"It was difficult to explain to the management that *The Getaway* was going to be a year late," reflects Writer and Director (and Aussie) Brendan McNamara. "It was never going to be a particularly fun meeting. Luckily, everyone's stuck with us for the ride." And what a rade it's proven to be. Starting way back in August 1999, McNamara and his internal SCEE development team had set itself an ambitious task - to accurately recreate 70 square miles of central London for use in a filmic gangster crime simulation game. Following two different characters through the crime-addled city streets, the plot would lead players into the seedy underworld of gangland London, and include encounters with the infamous Triads, East End mobsters and the Yardies. Play would consist of on-foot shooting and exploring, plus perilous car chases through the streets of the capital. Of course, such huge plans would mean the game would require a lot of cash, a lot of manpower and a whole lot of time.

Unfortunately, noone knew just how much time.

SOME BACK STORY

The story behind how Team SoHo (previously known as Studio London) achieved this has now become the stuff of videogame folklore. A dedicated team of artists set out with digital cameras and, quite literally, took photos of *every* shopfront and building in their chosen area. These images were then pasted onto the front of virtual structures identical in scale to their real-life counterparts. Starting with Piccadilly Circus, they worked outwards until they reached Angel to the north, Lambeth Bridge to the south, Shoreditch to the east and Hype Park to the west.

"Both SCEE and SCEA really liked the idea and vision of The Getaway," recalls McNamara, "Even from the very beginning with the first screenshots of Piccadilly Circus that we released, people really bought into the idea of constructing a large portion of London for a videogame." Ah yes. Those screenshots. The ones that looked, shall we say, too real; a shiny silver car driving past Starbucks and Pret-à-Manager. The famous neon advertising boards that adorn Piccadilly Circus, the Burger King and Dunkin' Donuts signs beneath. The games industry was agasp - could these people really make a game that played as good as those screenshots looked? And were they screenshots or mock-ups?

That was over two years ago. Since then, PlayStation 2 has seen the graphical finesse of *Gran Turismo 3: A-spec, Metal Gear Solid 2* and, more importantly, crime-based adventure *Grand Theft Auto 3*. Games that had promised so much but crucially delivered so much more. The PlayStation 2 was now officially hot. Developers were walking it like they talked it and the stage was finally built for a great game that combined the realism of *Gran Turismo 3* and the gameplay of *GTA3*. Unfortunately, instead of doing just that, *The Getaway* suddenly made a swift handbrake turn and went into hiding. Not to a grimy caravan on an allotment in Essex, but to the fourth floor of SCEE's development studio complex in the heart of Soho. With a lack of development updates, the rumours soon started. *The Getaway* was cancelled. Those screenshots had been pre-rendered. Sony had pumped millions into a lost cause.

So had *The Getaway* really gone AWOL? What happened to it?

Well, quite a lot actually.

TIME FOR A REVAMP

Creating a game as vast as this needed time. Much more time. More than McNamara and his team had ever envisaged. Originally *The Getaway* had been planned as a mission-based racer for the PSone, partly inspired by Reflections' mission-based car game *Driver*. Its focus was on driving with no on-foot element. At this time, the London level covered only 15 per cent of the area now rendered in the PS2 version. When *Driver 2* came out in 2000 with the added option of getting out of the car and walking, as well as driving, the team decided to shift attention to a more powerful platform. As a result, *The Getaway* was rebuilt from scratch for PS2. It didn't use an existing game engine, it wasn't a port and all the technology used was specially developed by the coders. It's as pure a PS2 videogame as you could expect to find.

"When we got hold of the PS2, we decided we wanted to create some really extensive environments," explains McNamara. "It's difficult do that with only 4mb of video RAM, which meant we had

to find a way of streaming all those millions of textures in order to create realistic environments." Once this had been achieved, it became clear that with such an impressive game world, everything that inhabited it had to be equally realistic. After all, creating your location is only the first stage.

"When we put out characters into the game they looked lifeless," remembers McNamara. "Then we made the decision to scan real people's faces, bodies, expressions and movements in. They looked brilliant then, but still lacked life and personality." Something more was required.

It was at this stage that *The Getaway* took a new direction. One that added the extra 12 months of development time McNamara talks of. "To achieve the right level of personality and atmosphere, we involved people from the film and TV industry," says McNamara. Simon Wood, a Production Designer, scouted for interior locations, while Katie Ellwood as Script Writer assisted McNamara in the writing of a 70-page script. A cast of actors was also recruited to play the various characters in the game, a move that provided film production values. "A lot of people in the team have film sensibility and film aspirations, but they still love videogames," McNamara explains. "I guess we asked the question 'Can something be more than a movie *and* more than a videogame - I don't know what you'd call that, but that's what we were trying to do."

It's well-documented that Team SoHo looked to such films as *The Long Good Friday* for inspiration. However, McNamara is keen to point out that they always wanted to create a 'serious' game, as opposed to the more comic stylings of Guy Ritchie's *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. "*The Getaway* has been deliberately designed as an 18-certificate game," states McNamara. "Not just so we could be gratuitous, but because it meant we could tackle issues usually only reserved for films." This means the game is graphically violent, and, to paraphrase Simon Bates, contains sexual swear words.' Yes, *those* swear words.

"We've tried to appeal to an older audience. Not just over-18s, but those outside the normal type of gamers. We'll be showing trailers at cinemas and I'm hoping people will see it and say, "Wow, I'm going to buy that."

'But how does it feel to play?' you ask. Does it really matter that the game is advertised in the cinema, that the cut-scenes were acted out by real actors and if you drive over Waterloo Bridge you can see the London Eye exactly where it should be? Is *The Getaway* a case of style over substance? More importantly, are you still wondering whether the screenshots on this page are real?

CRUISING THE CITY STREETS

Happily, *OPS2* can confirm that those images are the real deal. Sitting with Chun Wah Kong, *The Getaway*'s Lead Designer, we watch as he loads up the game. The opening cut-scene begins. Two gangsters are sat in a car, bantering about their last criminal assignment. The pair's job is to kidnap the child of Mark Hammond, an ex-gangster trying to go straight. The action then cuts to Mark's wife Susie Hammond and their son as the two gangsters accost them, claiming to be detectives. Realising their scam, Susie tries to grab her son and a shot rings out. Susie is wounded and the gangsters flee with the boy. Mark appears on the scene just in time to witness his son

being driven off and his wife lying bleeding on the floor.

From here, the player is instantly thrown into a cross-London chase to the gangster's warehouse hideout south of the river. Following a direction cursor, we make our way across Waterloo Bridge and take a hard left along the south bank of the Thames. Wah Kong asks how we're finding the handling. "A bit sensitive," is the answer, as we bounce our car off walls, lamp posts and oncoming traffic.

For gamers used to the more forgiving driving experience of *GTA3, The Getaway* does take getting used to. At one point, the car flips over after a nasty collision. "That's it," says Wah Kong. "You'll have to start again." In this level and in this game, you don't get a second chance. As we eventually master the controls, other subtleties outside the car pull you into *The Getaway*'s gameworld. Pedestrians are localised, for example. Drive through Chinatown and most people sport Oriental features, for instance. Even the type of vehicles reflect your current position. Cruise through Mayfair and you'll pass Bentleys and Mercs; drive through East London and Capris and Cortinas are the order of the day. In total, 65 licensed vehicles feature, among them a double-decker bus and a forklift truck.

On reaching the warehouse, Mark leaves the car - and we take control of him in third-person view and enter the building impressively, going through the door cues no loading screen - we just walk straight in... and promptly get shot. "Gamers will have to think about this game differently to what they're used to," laughs Wah Kong. "You can't just walk in, guns blazing. You need to think how you'd do it for real." Trying again, we use a combination of controls to tentatively check round the corner, before jumping out and blowing away the first of the gangsters. It soon becomes apparent such stealthier tactics are essential to stay alive.

We take another hit and Mark begins to stagger. Part of his suit turns red as blood oozes from a wound. Aiming now gets tougher as the injury saps Mark's strength. "We don't use health bars," says Wah Kong. "It helps people forget they're in a game." The interior of the warehouse looks and feels authentic, with 'real' products stacked on pallets. Famous beer labels nestle alongside well-known cigarette logos. It's indicative of the detail Team SoHo has gone to and, incredibly, Wah Kong hopes to make this background furniture destructible for the finished game.

After dispatching all the gangsters, you reach the office of East End gang boss Charlie Jolson. As a cut-scene plays out, we learn that Jolson is using Mark's son as hostage in order to blackmail Mark into doing a series of jobs. In the finished game, these will total 12 missions. A further 12 will follow, playing from the perspective of policeman Frank Carter. The first of these is potentially suicidal: do a hit against some of Mark's former gang members in a restaurant in Chinatown. For once, cut-scenes are well-scripted, and never sound forced. The facial expressions add to the effect, as does the tight lip-syncing, courtesy of the Talking Heads technology designed by the games Lead Animator, Gavin Moore.

Starting the game's first mission, and now a little more au fait with the controls, we take the opportunity to do some sightseeing - driving up the wrong side of Regent Street and donutting into Oxford Street, before taking the pavement route into the heart of Soho. "We're including a Tourist mode in the finished game," reveals Wah Kong. "You'll be able to take pictures of the landmarks." The team has also added a special Taxi Driver mode. Pick up tourists, and in an inspired twist, take the unknowing passengers on the *longest* route between two destinations.

PASSION AND COMMITMENT

Three years in development, a year overdue and little or no information filtering out about the game's progress has left much of the gaming press sceptical about *The Getaway.* But McNamara remains positive, "There aren't any games on Xbox that look as good or feel as big as *The Getaway* on PS2. There aren't any other games that have a story that actually means anything. That's probably why the game's taken so long."

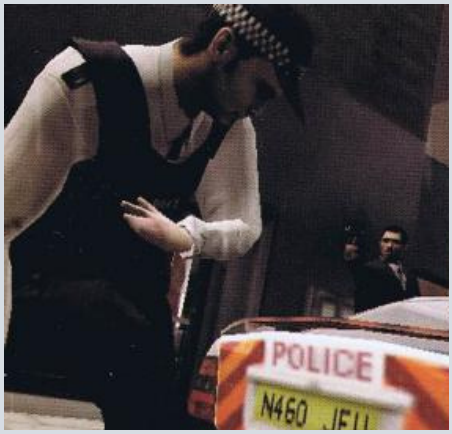
And from a technical per-

spective, the opportunities for expanding *The Getaway* are numerous. "We have this huge digital asset," McNamara points out. "We've spent two years building technology and another year working on the gameplay," he says. "We're now making another game using the same tools we developed *The Getaway* with. It's actually more of a prequel than a sequel."

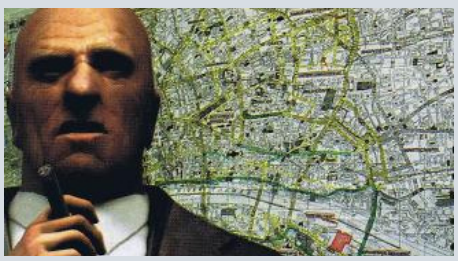
McNamara passion for the game is self-evident. "I'm very proud of the team for talking and working for three years," he concedes. "They could have bottled it many times or the management could have said, 'Enough's enough.' Now the game's finally close to coming out and I think it lives ut to something like 80 percent of our original vision."

The sleazy gambling den is part of a brothel. The team is still deciding whether to include 'adult' content here...

A more well-known image of *The Getaway*.



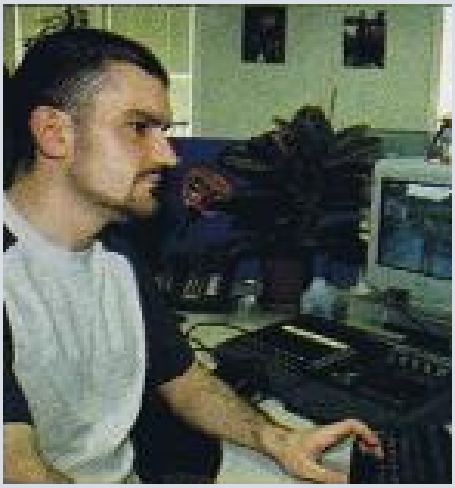
As in *GTA3*, if you start on the cops you're a marked man...



Mark's nemesis: Mr Charlie Jolson.

DOWN THE PUB

In order to help the team live a little of *the Getaway* lifestyle, the team built themselves the pub interior that features in the game - in their office it comes as a quite shock when you walk through an unmarked door in their Soho-based development studio to fin a spit-and-sawdust, East End boozer. Everything's intact, including nicotine-stained wallpaper, obligatory pork scratchings, real beer pumps and bottled lager in the fridge. No wonder *The Getaway* was a year late - they were all in the pub...



THE GETAWAY: A TIMELINE

The Getaway will finally hit the shelves this winter - so what's been happening?

October 1996

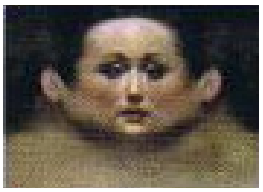
Early PSone titles Porsche Challenge and Rapid Racer are developed and released by SCEE. The internal development team behind these games will then go on to become Team SoHo.

April 1999

Work begins on a *Driver*-inspired PSone version of *The Getaway* with a team of just nine people.

August 1999

The decision is made to move *The Getaway* from PSone to PlayStation 2. The development starts from scratch.



October 1999

Team SoHo make the decision to set the game in photo-realistic streets and buildings, while research and development begins into the facial animation technology that will be known as Talking Heads.

March 2000

Anna Edwards (Yasmin) and Don Kembry (Mark Hammond) are cast as voice actors.

April 2000

The first screenshots of the game are released, showing a photo-realistic car driving around an accurately released London street. Jaws drop. Cynicism begins.

May 2000

Main story undergoes a rewrite and level-development takes place.

July 2000

A 70-page screenplay is penned by Brendan McNamara and Katie Ellwood. More characters are cast.

August 2000

A new motion-capture experiment puts multiple actors in any one scene. The system uses magnetic fields, rather than the more traditional light sensors, to make the process more flexible.

Christmas 2000

OPS2 reports for the first time on The Getaway. Javier Carrion, a Programmer on the game, is featured talking about the high level of detail being used for the cars and their physics. Again, our supplied screenshots look highly impressive. Again, are they real?

March 2001

Sam Coates, Lead Artist, reveals the process behind Team Soho's diligent mapping of 20 square miles of central London in a presentation called 'London wasn't Built In A Day: Content Acquisition. For Levels in *The Getaway*, Emphasis is now placed on the fact that 40 per cent of the gameplay will take place out of the car. Coates notes that pressure is high for his team to create a 'flagship PS2 title.'

April 2001

OPS2 covers on *The Getaway* - and those screenshots were real! We visit Team SoHo to see the game running. No out-of-car action yet but we watch a selection of vehicles career around a pohoto-realistic London.

October 2001

Brendan McNamara and his team are given a further year to complete *The Getaway*.

January 2002

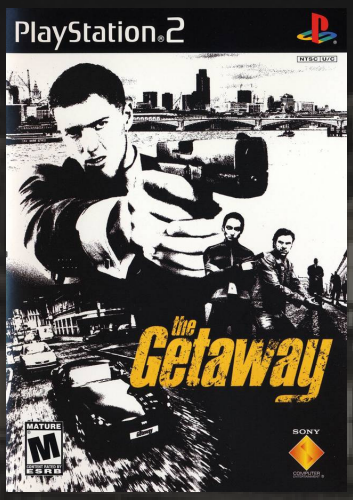
President of SCEE, Chris Deering, tells *OPS2*, "*The Getaway* could have been on the market now, but so many ideas have come along that will make it even better. It'll definetly be out way before next year,"

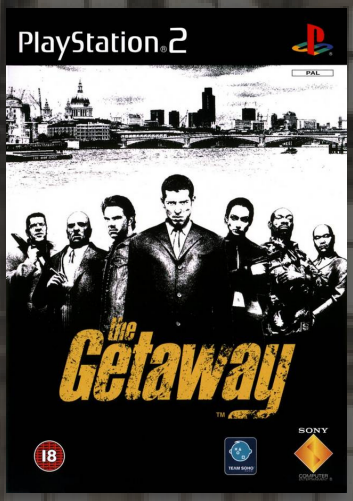
April 2002

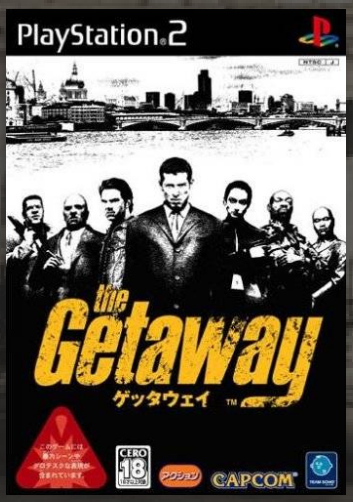
OPS2 visits the re-named Team SoHo and actually plays *The Getaway.* The public will get to play it this winter.

www.wheres-charlie.com
the Getaway
WLTBWA KSP53402

7.2

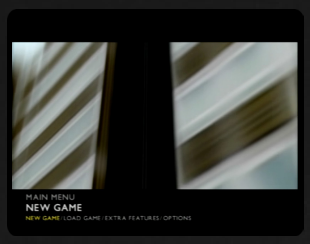






J N P

The Getaway



Developer	Team Soho
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA, (jp) Capcom
Release date	(eu) December 11, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

The Getaway is an action-adventure open world game. The Getaway is inspired by British gangland films Get Carter and Snatch. Initially, the release of the game was to coincide with the launch of the PlayStation 2 in 2000, but was delayed by 27 months due to the difficulty of re-creating large areas of London in high resolution.

The game focuses on two characters each with their own plot settings, being an ex-bank robber, Mark Hammond and a police officer in service with the Flying Squad, Detective Constable Frank Carter with both plots running parallel and intersecting before concluding in the finale of the game.

The Getaway is designed as a third-person sandbox-style game in which the player controls the two lead characters as they carry out their missions for game progression. Both of the two characters can perform a series of physical tasks, such as walking, sprinting, rolling, shooting and taking cover during a gunfight. Once Mark Hammond's missions are completed free roaming is unlocked for his character, free roaming allows the player to roam around the City district and Central London without mission objectives or time-limits.

The game features a number of licensed vehicles from real automobile manufacturers that the player can control, unlike those seen in the Grand Theft Auto which are fictional. The majority of the vehicles in the game are made by MG Rover Group, Jensen Motors, Saab, PSA Peugeot Citroën, Fiat and Lexus along with a number of others.

Firearms and weapons available to the player include the Glock 17 pistol, the AK-47 assault rifle, Remington 870 pump-action shotgun and the Heckler & Koch MP5 sub machine gun, other weapons include a meat cleaver and crowbar among others.

A major feature in the game was its approach to immersion and being "movie like", achieved mostly by not including the typical HUD; such as with car chases being done by signaling the player with the vehicles turn signals, rather than a large arrow above the car or the player characters limping or bleeding profusely to represent low health instead of a health bar/meter.

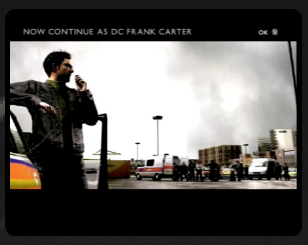
The game originally began life on the 32-bit PlayStation, off the back of Porsche Challenge. After having made an acclaimed circuit driving game, Team Soho, headed by Brendan McNamara - like many other developers at the time - felt that a free roaming vehicle game was an interesting concept worth exploring. The title was prototyped and playable missions were made, but it then evolved into a PlayStation 2 project. However the original code was kept and there was talk of including it on the finished game, which would ultimately not happen. Apart from several screenshots printed in the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, the original version would never see release.

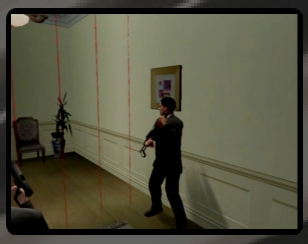
In moving over to vastly more capable hardware, the scope of the title expanded, as did its ambitions. Bizarre Creations were generating a lot attention due to their

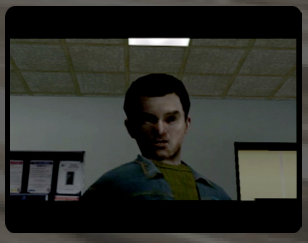
successful result in reproducing the streets of central London for their Dreamcast racer Metropolis Street Racer (or MSR). As MSR was being hyped and primed for release as one of the Dreamcast's so-called "killer games", SCEE felt compelled to attempt to steal Sega's thunder by promising the creation of a PlayStation 2 title which would re-create a massive 113 square kilometers (70 square miles) of London, displaying the ferocity and length at which SCEE was willing to attempt to challenge its veteran competitor. The final creation actually only yielded an area of 16 square kilometers (10 square miles).

However, re-creating even 16 square kilometers proved a daunting task and a technical nightmare; factors which may have delayed the release of The Getaway by several years. In the case of the latter, the programmers had to perfect an engine that could constantly stream three-dimensional geometry and texture data; of the areas of London the player was currently in close proximity to. At no point was the entire city loaded into memory, as it simply wouldn't fit. Unlike Rockstar North's Grand Theft Auto III, it was not an acceptable option for the Team Soho developers to break the city up into separate regions and impose a loading time delay when crossing between areas.

The hype surrounding the project began in earnest just before E3 2000, when a series of screenshots were published online. They revealed an amazing level of detail, clearly showing the very identifiable streets near Team Soho's studio. Though it has been argued that these shots were actually mock-up pre-renders, it is possible they were taken from actual code which received further detailed vehicle and character models, higher resolution textures and also anti-aliased the final output.





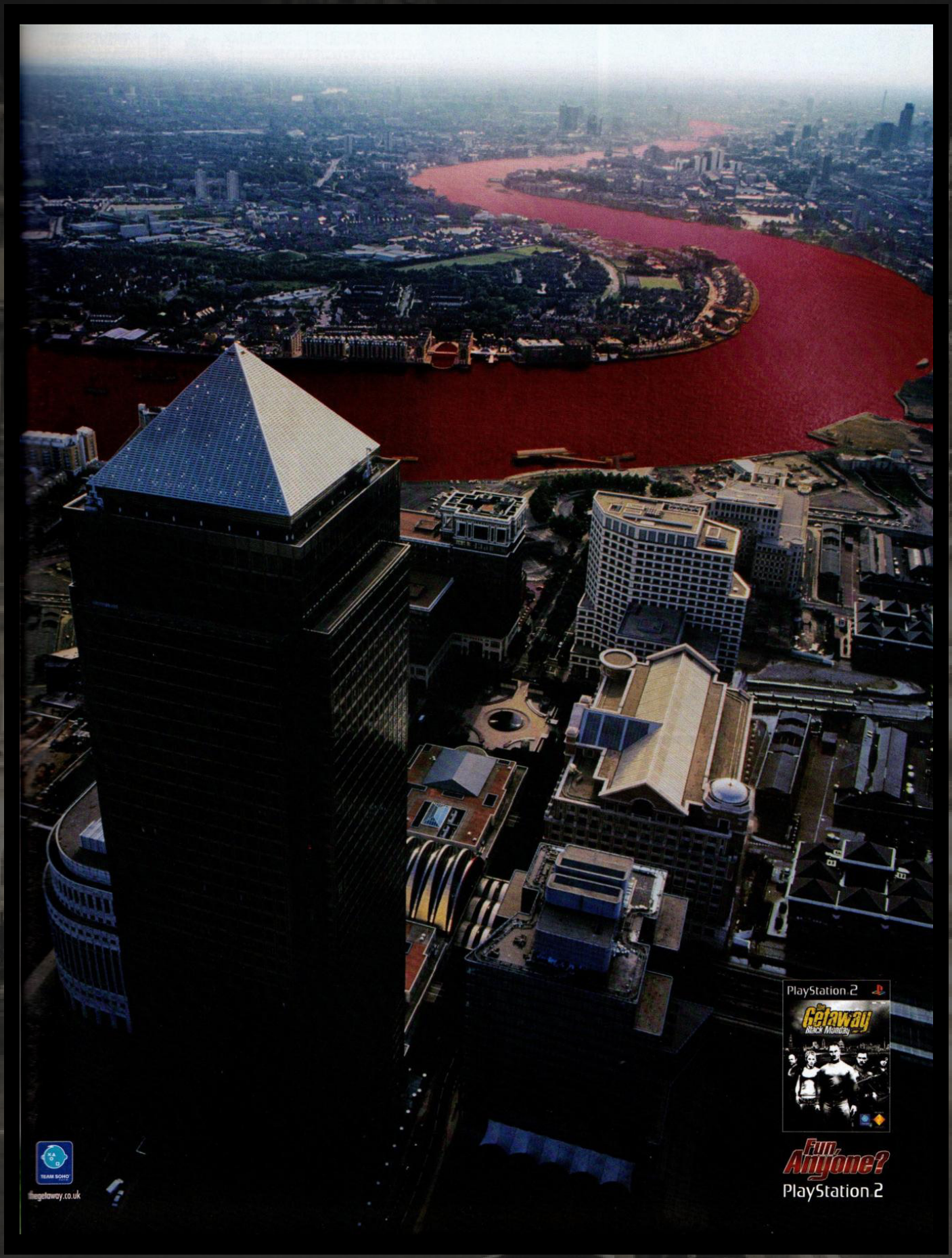


Although the prototype game was constantly shown behind closed doors, the public was not privy to its results for at least another year. It was only finally made playable at E3 2002. By then the project had ballooned, exceeding its development budget many times over. SCEE however had a range of other titles in development, but the decision was taken by Phil Harrison to can many of them; perhaps to allow yet more funds to be poured into The Getaway. As a result of this, the SCEE Manchester and SCEE Leeds.

But this "all eggs in one basket" gamble did pay off. When the game was launched in December 2002, it received rave reviews and was a huge seller across Europe; especially in the United Kingdom. Worldwide and particularly in the United States, the game received mixed reviews and sales. The fact that it was released around the same time as the hugely popular Grand Theft Auto: Vice City (to which the game was often compared) also hurt sales despite a large marketing campaign in the United States.

One alteration that Team Soho had to make was the removal of a vehicle and phone box logos which appeared in the initial release of the game. During one of Hammond's missions, a British Telecommunications (BT) van is used in a mission in which Hammond must kill the driver and take the van to assassinate a corrupt police officer. BT complained that it *"did not want [its] name and livery associated with the violent scenes"* in the game, and was worried that it *"might incite attacks on [its] engineers."* Although the initial release of the game was not recalled, subsequent production was amended to remove the offending details.

Originally released uncut with a MA15+, it was later resubmitted and banned in Australia. It was later released as a censored version.


PlayStation 2
The Getaway
Black Monday
Fun, Anyone?
PlayStation 2
TEAM SOHO
thegetaway.co.uk

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

by: PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) 2004 August #30

Right you lot, let's get the bangers and mash back on the frog and toad with the Muppets and, erm... so forth

The original *Getaway* is one of those titles that can be as much of a beaut adventure as it can a gamer's nightmare. One second you might be happily blasting thugs and hooligans with your shotgun as you creep through drug dens and dark alleys. The next, however, you'll likely be back on the roads to do one of the many driving sections. Oh and how the driving sections irk. This was made all the more frustrating as the game arrived in a time where we were experiencing the sheer vehicular bliss that is *GTA3*.

You see, *The Getaway* had a completely accurate map of London. Which is one of the worst cities to drive in - ever! High-speed chases where traffic cones would send you spinning out of control, smacking into some hat-clad Volvo driver, caused many a hurled joypad. But props had to be given to the developer for such an ambitious project. Almost as soon as the first one was released, talk of a sequel began. And we've been lucky enough to get a work-in-progress gander at it.

The game is titled *The Getaway: Black Monday*, rather than *The Getaway 2*, which should probably clue canny gamers into a few things. Whenever the mighty colon is brought out in favour of a number or Roman numeral, it's a fair bet that the sequel has only a tentative link with the original game.

Certainly, that is the case with *TG: MB*. This time, you will play as one of three characters. One is Sgt. Ben Mitchell, who is your standard cop-with-a-dark-past. Accused of shooting a kid in the back, his friends and colleagues now treat him like Jar Jar Binks merchandise, and it's his mission to prove himself worthy once more. The other main lead is Eddie O'Connor, a former boxer and general hard man who finds himself involved in a bank job that invariably goes wrong.

Like the plots of the first game's two main characters things are kept fairly separate, but apparently converge a lot more at the end and even influence the outcome based on certain moral choices taken.

The third character is a bit of a mystery, it has to be said. It's a she, linked somehow to Eddie, and her story is said to be more "stealthy". Intriguing, to say the least.

Having only played the game briefly at E3, we can't really judge the driving sections. Although it has to be said, they look very cool. The traffic moves faster, the cops are smarter and the addition of motorbikes make weaving through London's streets a whole lot easier.

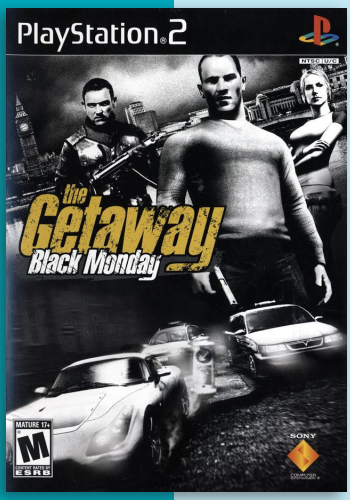
Back, of course, is the gritty cinematic feel of the game. That mean's there'll be plenty of swearing, gunplay, graphic violence and liberal use of the word "Muppet". Hopefully some of the longer cutscenes will be skipable this time, but either way we know they're going to look good and fill the void that Guy Ritchie has left ever since he hooked up with Madonna.

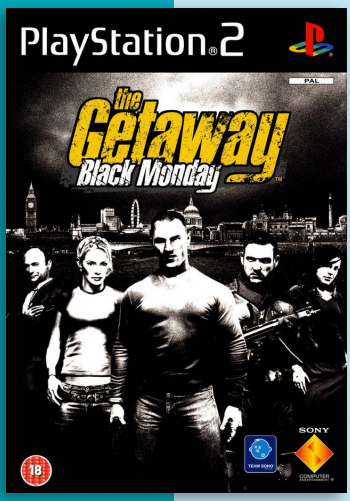
The level of depth that comes from an uncertain climax combined with slicker graphics, better driving mechanics and a fresh new story and new locations all leave *Black Monday* looking like something of a belter.

Hopefully the mistakes of the first one will be fixed and this time around it'll be consistent fun filling the gutters of London with blood. One should beware of using the terms "Muppet" and "geezer" too liberally, though. It tends to annoy flatmates and girlfriends. So we're told.

5.7

The Getaway: Black Monday





JNP

Developer	SCEE London Studio
Publisher	SCEE, (us) SCEA, (jp) Sega
Release date	(eu) November 12, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

The Getaway: Black Monday is a sequel to 2002's The Getaway. Black Monday The game is set in London and concerns the lives of three playable characters - the policeman Eddie O'Connor, a boxer, Sam Thompson and a scam artist, Sam Thompson — with different abilities.

Unlike the Grand Theft Auto, True Crime and Driver series (Excluding Driver: San Francisco), the game features licensed vehicles from makes such as Renault, Brabus, and Vauxhall. There are about 130 playable vehicles.

Like the first game The Getaway: Black Monday has no HUD, everything can be found on screen. Player Health is shown by how bloody the character is; characters may also limp and/or hold their gut. Health is restored by leaning against a wall or using a first aid kit on a wall. Vehicle damage is represented by smoke and reduced performance.

Each main playable character has unique abilities. Sergeant Mitchell, can use gas grenades to subdue enemies less lethally and can also arrest enemies. Eddie O'Connor can fight unarmed and with Melee Weapons, and Dual wield nearly every firearm. Sam Thompson has no combat ability but has the ability to climb and crawl in order to avoid enemy detection.

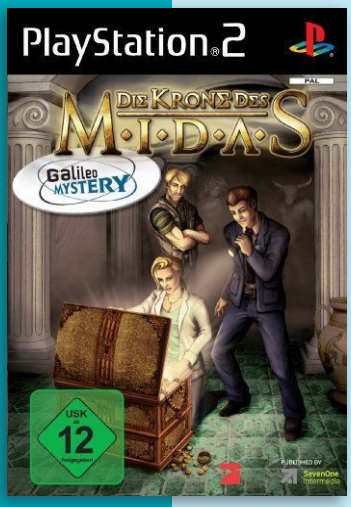
The game has some differences between American version and European version. In the American version of the game, there are two extra vehicles. Those vehicles are a generic orange sports car and a New York City taxi. The taxi is a current generation Ford Crown Victoria.

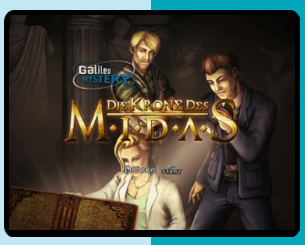
The Getaway: Black Monday was met with "mixed" reception upon release. In Japan, Famitsu gave it a score of 30 out of 40.

Maxim gave the game a score of four stars out of five and said, *"Fun as this game is to play, the best moments come when you just sit back and observe. Wonderfully acted, written, and directed motion-capture cut scenes play like the Snatch follow-up Guy Ritchie should have made, further evidence of the narrowing gap between video game and movie production values."*

"thegetaway.wikia.com"

Galileo Mystery: The Crown of Midas





Developer	Independent Arts Software
Publisher	Seven One Intermedia
Release date	(eu) October, 2009
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Galileo Mystery: The Crown of Midas, released as Galileo Mystery: Die Krone des Midas, was a German only release.

The game revolves around Stephan, who took a job as a night watchmen in a museum, but his night becomes more difficult after dangerous intruders are introduced.

P

6.5

The Grim Adventures of Billy & Mandy

J N P

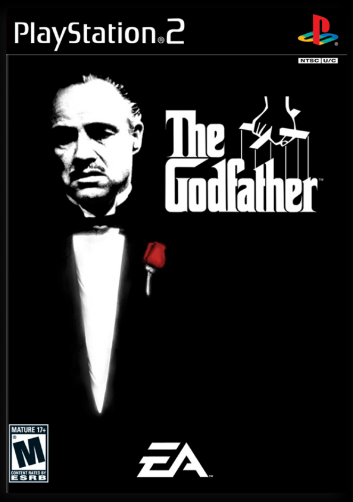
Developer	High Voltage Software
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) September 25, 2006
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-4 Players

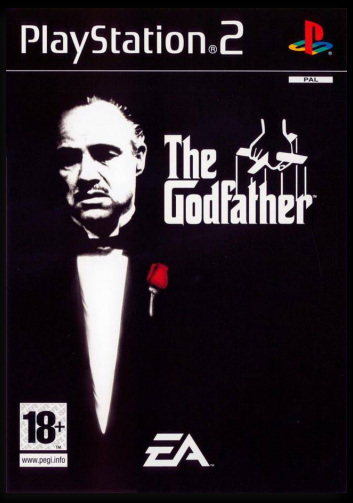
The Grim Adventures of Billy & Mandy: The Video Game is a fighting game based on Cartoon Network's television series of the same name.

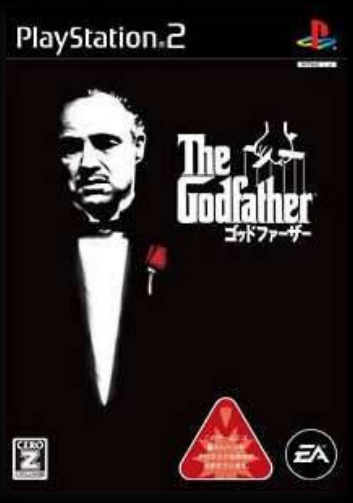
The game features fifteen full playable characters, along with five bonus "horde characters", in-game enemies given a limited playable moveset. The gameplay heavily mirrors that of the Power Stone series and Shrek Super Slam. In the game, players can execute light and heavy style attacks. Gameplay includes multiplayer, solo, and co-op Story Mode and Mission Mode. Different weapons are scattered through all the levels, such as a halberd or a club. Treasure chests contain items including weapons, healing items, and Mojo Balls that restore the player's Mojo Meter. When the Mojo Meter fills once, a Mojo Smackdown can be performed where the character attacks the opponent with a barrage of punches, kicks, and slaps, and finally a piledriver. When the Mojo Meter fills twice, a Mojo Meltdown can be performed, instantly knocking out all opponents.

The PlayStation 2's DVD compatibility feature came with behind-the-scenes footage and the season one episode "Little Rock of Horror".

7.5







J N P

The Godfather

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) March 21, 2006
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

The Godfather is a 2006 open world action-adventure game. The game is based upon the 1972 film The Godfather and tells the story of an original character, Aldo Trapani, whose rise through the ranks of the Corleone family intersects with the plot of the film on numerous occasions. His actions in the game often take the form of events that happened off screen in the film; for example, he avenges Bonasera's daughter, he drives Vito Corleone to the hospital after he is shot, he plants the gun for Michael Corleone to kill Sollozzo and Captain McCluskey, he places the horse's head in Jack Woltz's bed.

The Godfather is an open world action-adventure game played from a third-person perspective, in which the player controls Aldo Trapani as he ascends through the ranks of the Corleone family, with his rise intersecting with the narrative of the film on numerous occasions. The basic gameplay and game mechanics are similar to most open world titles as the player can travel across the city freely, commandeer vehicles, do whatever they want in terms of attacking and/or killing innocent civilians, and progress through the storyline at their own leisure, spending as much time traversing the city as they wish.

Much of the game is based around third-person shooting, with the player able to wield a .38 snub nose, a pistol, a magnum, a Tommy gun, and a shotgun, as well as projectiles such as Molotov cocktails and dynamite. The game features both a lock-on system and a manual aiming system. In the manual system, the players have complete freedom to aim wherever they wish. In the lock-on system, when the player locks a target, a targeting reticule appears on-screen. The longer the player is locked on, the smaller the reticule gets, allowing for more precise aiming. Within the lock-on system, the player also has a certain degree of freedom to aim manually; the reticule can be moved around the locked on target, allowing the player to target specific areas. If the reticule turns red, the player has found a weak point. All enemies have five weak points: their two knees and their two shoulders, plus their groin. If the player shoots one of their knees, the enemy will no longer be able to run, but will continue to shoot back. If the player hits a shoulder, the enemy won't be able to fire back or fight. Hitting the groin accomplishes the same effect as a knee shot, also stunning the target.

The other mode of combat in the game is melee combat, for which the game uses a system dubbed "BlackHand", after the Black Hand extortion method. Once the player has locked onto an NPC, either hostile or non-hostile, they use the right analog stick to engage in melee combat. The system allows for light attacks, heavy attacks and directional attacks. It also allows the player to swing the opponent around, drag them, strangle them, lift them to their feet if they fall to their knees, slam them against walls, smash their head against counters, throw them over ledges and out windows, and perform execution maneuvers when the opponent is suitably weakened.

Players can also wield numerous melee weapons, such as baseball bats, tire irons, police batons, and wrenches.

A major part of The Godfather's gameplay is extorting businesses. The player must extort business to earn enough respect to level up, to complete certain missions, and to earn money. When the player is attempting to intimidate a business owner into paying protection money, a meter appears on screen with a green bar and a red bar. To get the owner to agree to pay, the player must intimidate them until the meter fills up to the green bar. After this point, the more intimidation the player can achieve, the more money the owner will pay out. However, if the meter passes the red bar, the owner will begin to fight back and will refuse to pay anything. Every business owner has a weak point, something they particularly fear, and if the player finds it, the amount of money paid out will rise faster than the meter fills, allowing the player to extort more money before the meter reaches the red zone. Intimidation methods include beating the owner up, throwing them around, smashing their shop, attacking customers, or pointing firearms at them.

There are five main geographical regions in the game; Little Italy (controlled by the Corleone family), Brooklyn (controlled by the Tattaglia family), New Jersey (controlled by the Stracci family), Hell's Kitchen (controlled by the Cuneo family) and Midtown (controlled by the Barzini family). At the start of the game, the entire map is available for the player to explore, but the game encourages the player to remain in Little Italy, as it is the easiest area of which to gain control. To completely control an area, the player must extort all business and rackets owned by the other families, and take over their warehouses and hubs. Many businesses

serve as fronts to rackets, which can be taken over in a similar manner to the front, although in the case of a racket, the player has the option of simply buying the racket boss out. Rackets yield more money than businesses.

The player can also gain control of warehouses and hubs. Warehouses supply rackets, and hubs supply warehouses. Both warehouses and hubs are heavily guarded, and the player must fight their way inside, and find the boss, who they can then intimidate as with business owners and racket bosses. Warehouses pay out more than rackets and hubs pay out more than warehouses. Ultimately, the player must tackle the enemies' strongest holdout - their compound. Once the compound is destroyed, that family has been defeated. To destroy a compound, the player must fight their way inside and then plant a bomb. All compounds have two buildings, both of which must be bombed. Each compound is heavily guarded by opposing family members.

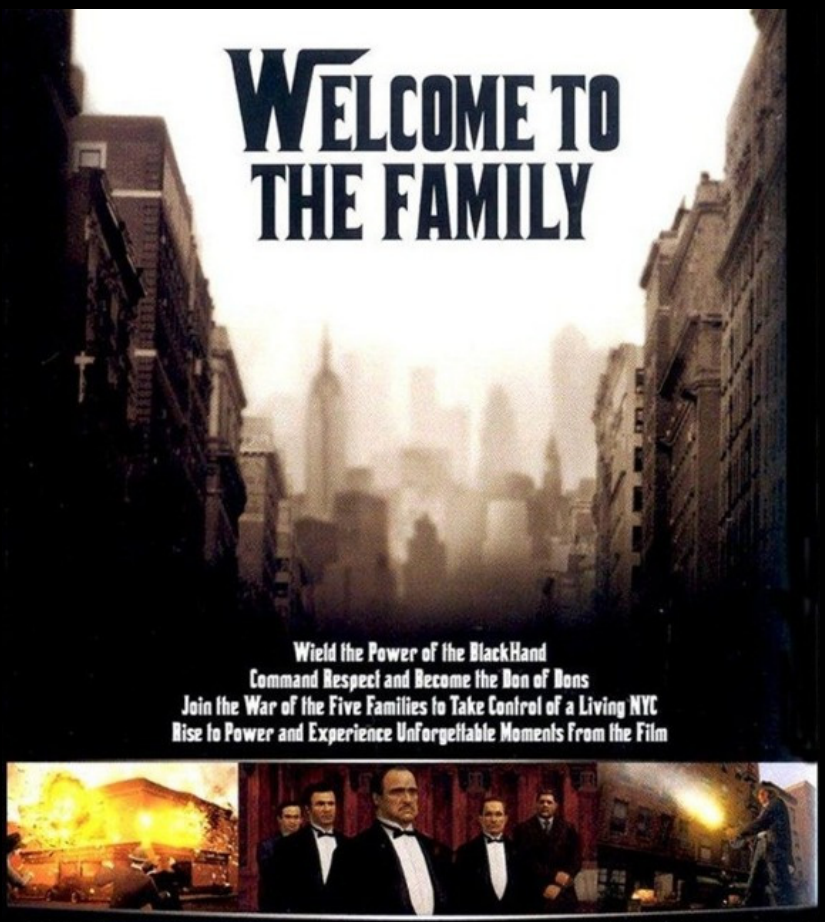
As the player takes over a rival families' businesses and kills their men, their vendetta level will rise. If it gets too high, a mob war will break out. This results in members of the opposing family attacking the player on sight, and attempting to bomb Corleone owned businesses, rackets, warehouses and hubs. The only way to win a mob war is to bomb a rival family business or bribe an FBI agent to distract the opposing family until the vendetta level has lowered.

As well as vendetta levels, the player must also be aware of "heat" during the game. Shooting rival family members in public, killing innocent people, or attacking police officers will all raise heat levels. If the level gets too high, police will fire upon the player on sight. To avoid this, the player can bribe police to ignore them for a while. Bribing a po-

lice captain will earn the player more time during which the police turn a blind eye than bribing a street cop.

In addition to extorting businesses and attempting to destroy rival families, the player must also engage in story missions. Completing story missions is the only way for the player to advance in rank in the Corleone family, moving from Outsider through the ranks of Enforcer, Associate, Soldier, Capo, Underboss, Don and, finally, Don of NYC. However, completing all of the storyline missions will only take the player to the level of Underboss. To achieve the Don of NYC level, the player must take over all rival businesses, rackets, warehouses, and hubs, destroy all compounds, and own every safehouse.

Apart from progressing in rank in the Corleone family, the other method of progression in the game involves "Respect." Earning respect allows the player to level up, which awards skill points to spend on various attributes. Respect can be earned by numerous means, such as completing missions, extorting businesses, taking over rackets, blowing up safes, bribing police officers, robbing banks, successfully flirting with women, entering new areas, carrying out execution maneuvers or performing hits and favors.



The Godfather was first announced by Electronic Arts on March 10, 2004. Speaking at the Bear Stearns Media, Entertainment & Information Conference in Palm Beach, Florida, EA's CFO Warren Jensen confirmed rumors that EA were working on a Godfather game. No other details were revealed except for the fact that it would *"likely be an M-rated game,"* making it EA's first ever M-rated title. The game was first shown at the 2004 Spike Video Game Awards on December 14. Slated for a third quarter release in 2005 on as yet unspecified current generation systems, EA showed a pre-rendered cutscene depicting Vito Corleone drinking wine, scratching his cheek, and then looking into the camera and saying *"Some day, and that day may never come, I may call upon you to do a service for me. But until that day, accept this, as a gift."*

Gameplay details remained unknown until January 2005, when Famitsu published an interview with producer Hunter Smith. He revealed the game would be an open world title in the vein of the Grand Theft Auto games, and that, at present, developers EA Redwood Shores had one-hundred-and-twenty staff working full-time on the game, with that number expected to increase to two-hundred in the coming months. He stated that although the game itself was only 15% complete, the narrative was finalized; players would control an original character who begins as a small-time member of the Corleone family, and must work his way up through the ranks. He stated that EA had wanted to make an open-world game for some time; *"We wanted to make a title with the same style of open world, but with a strong background, one where you build human relationships while creating your own story."* He also explained that the player's progression path through the game could be determined by the player, but would intersect with the plot of the film at certain points, and the player would get to participate in famous scenes from the movie; *"It's constructed so that players will appear in the scene and will feel as if they are alive within it."*

On February 1, The Hollywood Reporter revealed Marlon Brando, James Caan and Robert Duvall had been hired to reprise their roles as Vito Corleone, Sonny Corleone and Tom Hagen, respectively. All three had also allowed EA to use their likenesses in the game, with both Caan and Duvall doing facial motion capture work. Although Brando had died in July of the previous year, he had recorded dialogue for the game prior to his death, in what was his last acting job. It was also revealed that EA had acquired the rights to Nino Rota's score for the film. Later that same day, EA released its first official statement regarding the game, announcing it was being released for PlayStation 2, Xbox, Windows and PSP. Executive producer David De Martini stated *"We are incredibly excited and honored to have the opportunity to bring the fiction of The Godfather to life in a video game. The Godfather movies raised the standard for cinematic achievement with their high level of drama and intense storytelling, and in fall 2005 gamers will be able to experience that dangerous and living world of The Godfather for themselves."*

The game officially premiered on February 10, in a red carpet event held in Little Italy, with James Caan, Robert Duvall and Johnny Martino (who played Paulie Gatto in the film) in attendance. At the event, it was announced that a playable demo would not be available until the E3 event in May. David De Martini explained the game had already been in development for two years, including a full year of preproduction and research. He revealed the developers had worked closely with Mark Winegardner, author of The Godfather Returns, to ensure the storyline stayed within the canon of the narrative, and maintained the correct tone. De Martini also stated that as well as Rota's score, Bill Conti and Ashley Irwin had composed one-hundred minutes of new music for the game.

In the build-up to E3 in May, EA announced the game would also be released for a next-generation platform; the Xbox 360. At the event itself, a playable demo was made available to journalists, but not to the public. The demo debuted the "BlackHand" control system, which had been developed by the inventor of the swing mechanism in the Tiger Woods PGA Tour franchise.

Speaking to GameSpot in June, David De Martini stated the original idea for the project was Paramount's, who first approached EA about a game adaptation of the film in early 2003. After numerous meetings, the concept was decided upon; a "dual-story" game that would feature a character moving through an open world and rising through the ranks of the Corleone family, whilst at the same time, following the plot of the film. De Martini explained *"Our approach to this project has been very simple. We set out to make a great open- and living-world game, one that would stand on its own even without the Godfather license. Then, once we had accomplished that mission and made a very innovative game, the plan was to add all the Godfather flavor and texture to make the experience even more memorable."* He stated *"We wanted the game to heavily focus on what went on behind the scenes and in the living world. Not the ordering around but rather the actual activities that the order takers had to do on a daily basis to move the family interests forward."* He also promised the game would be unlike any other open world game; *"We want you to walk the streets and experience the realities of the life that you have created through how you play the game. If you are more violent, the world you live in becomes more violent. If you play in a more balanced way, the streets are more balanced, and people are not as prone to draw guns and shoot. To put it another way, we are creating a world with a memory and a world with consequences. When we push these two dimensions, the world starts to feel alive - it*

has feelings and becomes more dynamic. Many game makers in this genre set out to create life as we know it and then fall hopelessly short. Our model represents a significant innovation beyond what has shipped to date."

In July, The New York Times reported that Marlon Brando would not be voicing all of Vito Corleone's dialogue. Although Brando did record dialogue prior to his death, *"his actual voice will not appear in the game [...] rather, his recordings are guiding a professional voice mimic."* The article claimed that Brando's ailing health meant he could only breathe with the aid of an oxygen tank, the noise of which was picked up on the audio recordings, making them unusable in the game. After publication of the article, EA confirmed *"we recorded multiple sessions with a sound-alike to capture the entire performance of the Don Vito character, something we were not able to do with Mr. Brando."* However, they hoped that some of his audio may still make it into the game. Although it was already known that Al Pacino had turned down the opportunity to voice Michael Corleone, the article also revealed he had refused to lend his likeness to the game. Instead, Pacino had allowed Radical Entertainment to use his likeness for their upcoming game for Sierra Entertainment, Scarface: The World Is Yours.

On July 14, they announced the initial release of the game had been pushed to March 2006 so as to *"ensure quality."* De Martini explained *"The Godfather is one of the most cherished franchises in entertainment. Releasing the game in early 2006 allows us more time to perfect the open-world experience of being a member of the Corleone family."*

In January 2006, speaking to GameSpot, De Martini said of the delay, *"When you are dealing with a property like The Godfather, you have to take special care in making sure your work meets the level fans have come to expect from the franchise. With this fiction in our game, we had to hit a home run. I am tremendously thankful that EA gave our team the time we needed to get it right. I think it turned a good game into a great one."*

In an interview with IGN, he further explained, *"Last year when we were looking at the November window, we realized we were going to make compromises in quality that we didn't find acceptable. When that was made clear to us, based on schedules and other things, we had a long discussion on this side with regard to what would be the appropriate thing to do with this particular license, this particular property, this particular game, and when we shook all of that out, it was just too important for us to get this right. To risk something that's going to be good, instead of something that's great. I mean, when you're dealing with The Godfather, so many people have so many expectations of what you're going to deliver it's critically important that you pick a vision for that project and you stay on that vision."*

In April 2005, Francis Ford Coppola, director of the three Godfather films, was asked about the game on AMC's Sunday Morning Shootout. He responded, *"I knew nothing about it. [Paramount] never asked me if I thought it was a good idea. I went and I took a look at what it was. What they do is they use the characters everyone knows and they hire those actors to be there and only to introduce very minor characters. And then for the next hour they shoot and kill each other. I had absolutely nothing to do with the game and I disapprove. I think it's a misuse of film."*

However, the game's executive producer, David De Martini, implied Coppola did know about the game well in advance of its development, stating, *"We met with him on one occasion and we shared with him what our vision was for the game, and where we were going to go. He*

isn't choosing to participate in the project, but he did invite us up to the Coppola winery where he has his own private library. He's got a lot of materials from the original Godfather productions - so a lot of sketch designs for the sets, for the costumes, a lot of notes that he's taken in the original screenplay as well as in the book. He invited us up there to take a look around, and we sent four or five people for a week."

In June 2008, Anthony Puzo, son of author Mario Puzo, sued Paramount Pictures, claiming that a 1992 agreement between his father and Paramount entitled the author (or, as Mario had died in 1999, his estate) to a share of the profits generated from any audio-visual products based on or using elements of the films or novels. The court filing stated, *"In material breach of the audio-visual products agreement, Paramount has failed and refused to pay the Puzo Estate the sums due it in respect of the Godfather game."* In February 2009, Puzo won the suit, with Paramount paying out an undisclosed sum, thought to be in the region of several million dollars.

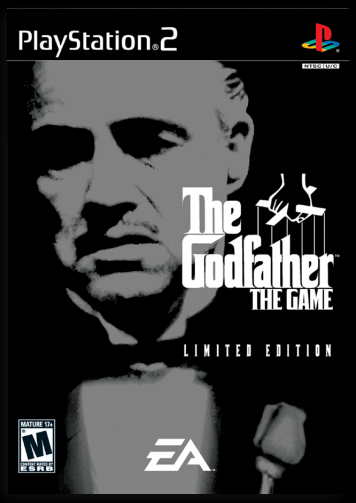
The Godfather received "generally favorable reviews" on all systems except the PSP, which received "mixed to average reviews." The PlayStation 2 version holds an aggregate scores of75 out of 100 on Metacritic, based on based on fifty-six reviews.

GameSpot's Greg Mueller scored the game 8.1 out of 10, calling the game *"a satisfying, lengthy adventure,"* and arguing *"it remains faithful to the classic film while managing to create a compelling story of its own [...] it handles the source material respectfully and manages to offer enough new content to feel like more than just a by-the-numbers adaptation of the movie."* IGN's Douglass C. Perry scored it 7.9 out of 10. Perry praised the concept of placing a new character in the existing narrative; *"Much of the story is carefully untarnished, so when you see pivotal scenes, they will be left relatively untouched. You'll hear and see these key scenes unfolding in front of you, but you'll be in the house, the car, the church, or the hospital as a close associate, rather than a bystander. You'll feel like an insider who's part of a great powerful narrative, and the feeling is eerily remarkable."* Although he was critical of the melee combat and the driving portions of the game, he called the extortion system *"awesome fun."* He concluded, *"people looking for a perfect game will be disappointed [but] there are elements that totally stand out from any similar games in this genre, from the extortion system to the business take-over model. Despite obvious areas in need of improvement, I had a blast playing The Godfather."* GameSpy's Will Tuttle scored the game 3.5 out of 5. Praising the use of the license, he wrote *"the game is best viewed as a complementary addition to the Godfather universe,"* calling it *"an ultimately entertaining sandbox game that doesn't really do much to help or hurt the license."* Game Informer's Andrew Reiner scored it 7.5 out of 10, writing *"while failing to transform the classic film into an engrossing interactive experience, the game does shine when it doesn't have to rely on the film license to pull it along."*

The Godfather sold well across all platforms. In the first week of the game's North American release, the PlayStation 2 version was Blockbuster's top rental title, with the Xbox version coming in second. Together, the two titles rented more copies than the rest of the top ten combined. During its first three months on release, the game sold over one million units across PlayStation 2, Xbox and PC. In the game's first week on release in the UK, it entered the charts at #1, knocking The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion from the top spot. It remained in the top ten chart for eight weeks.

At the 2007 Game Audio Network Guild (G.A.N.G.) Awards, composers Ashley Irwin and Bill Conti won the award for "Best Arrangement of a Non-Original Score."

The Godfather Limited Edition

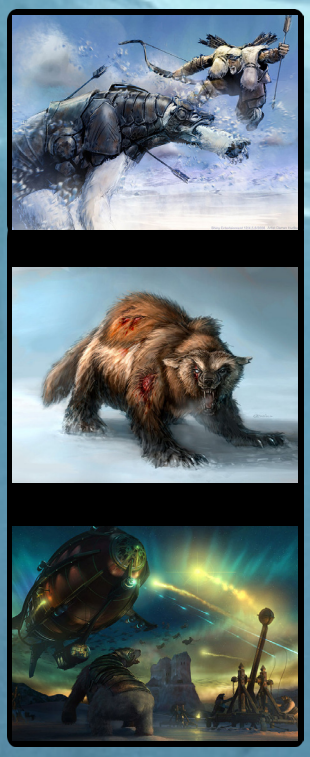


The Limited Edition 2 disc set came in a SteelBook case with a slip cover and includes a printed map of New York City circa 1946 as well a a disc with the following content:

- "The Godfather Legacy" – The Impact of the Godfather on pop culture
- A collection of 6 behind the scenes videos
- A "Detailed" strategy video

4.6

NP



The Golden Compass

Developer	Shiny Entertainment
Publisher	Sega, (eu) Sega Europe
Release date	(eu) November 30, 2007
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

The Golden Compass is a 2007 action-adventure puzzle game released on PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, PlayStation Portable, Wii, Xbox 360 and Windows, and Nintendo DS.

It is the video game of the film of the same name, although it is also partially based on the novel upon which the film is based, Northern Lights by Philip Pullman. The game was released prior to the film and features a slightly different sequence of events towards the end of the story, as well as additional footage at the end of the game not seen in the film. This was due to a last minute re-edit of the last half-hour of the film by New Line Cinema, which could not be incorporated into the game, as it was based on the shooting script. The Golden Compass was the last game developed by Shiny before Foundation 9 Entertainment merged them with The Collective, Inc..

The Golden Compass is an action-adventure/puzzle game played from a third-person perspective. Players control either Lyra Belacqua and her dæmon Pan, or the Panserbjørne Iorek Byrnison. Lyra's levels primarily involve platforming, stealth and puzzle solving, whilst Iorek's are mainly melee combat based.

A major aspect of the gameplay in Lyra's levels involves the shape-shifting ability of Pan, who can transform into four different forms; Ermine, Sloth, Hawk and Wildcat, with each form having its own unique ability. The Ermine's ability is "Insight", which allows Lyra to discover information about her surroundings, find hotspots, and reveal secrets. The Sloth's ability is "Whip", which allows Lyra to swing from poles and reach areas she cannot jump to. The Hawk's ability is "Glide", which allows Lyra to glide a short distance, covering gaps she wouldn't be able to get across any other way. The Wildcat's ability is "Climb", which allows Lyra to climb certain surfaces to reach otherwise inaccessible areas. Players often have to shift form mid-move. For example, to reach a certain platform, the player may need to use the "Whip" ability to have Lyra swing on a pole. After releasing her from the pole, the player may then need to immediately use the "Glide" ability to reach the platform, necessitating a form change whilst Lyra is in midair.

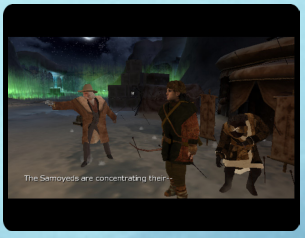
Also important in Lyra's levels are Evasion and Deception minigames. Evasion games occur whenever Lyra is spotted by an enemy, and involves pressing buttons to correspond with icons on screen to allow Lyra escape from her pursuer. Deception games are more common. These games take place whenever Lyra is involved in a conversation with someone and is attempting to deceive them. The better the player performs in the minigame, the more successful Lyra is in her deception. The minigames include, but are not limited to, matching symbols, collecting falling icons, avoiding falling icons, a Whac-A-Mole type game and a snooker type game.

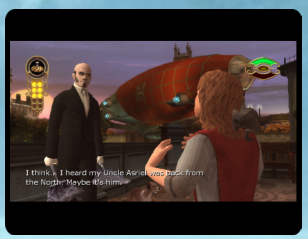
Another major aspect of the gameplay is the alethiometer, (a rare truth-telling device which features in the novels). Once the play-

er has access to the Alethiometer, it can be asked certain set questions. The device has thirty-six symbols on its outer edge, each with three meanings. These meanings are discovered over the course of game; some are learned automatically as the plot advances, others must be sought out by the player and can be missed. For each question, Lyra is given three words, and each word is assigned a hand on the Alethiometer. If Lyra knows the corresponding symbol of a given word, the hand automatically turns to the correct symbol. Words she doesn't know must be guessed by the player. When the three hands are all pointing at symbols, the player confirms the selection and Lyra asks the question. A balancing minigame then begins, where the player must press buttons corresponding to the on-screen display. The more symbols which were correctly identified in the first part of the game, the easier the balancing game is. If the player successfully completes the balancing game, the Alethiometer will answer the question.

The Golden Compass was unveiled on February 27, 2007. Sega revealed there would be thirteen levels in the game, including several locations not seen in the film, and players would be able to control Lyra, Pan and Iorek. The game would also feature the likenesses of the films' stars, but as of yet, voice acting roles had not been assigned.

Footage of the game was first shown on May 10, when it was revealed that Shiny personnel had been on the film set every day of principal photography, shooting footage of sets, costumes and props, and watching the filming of action scenes. Sega revealed that two levels in the game would be set in locations visited in the book, but not the film, and that the game world would be more expansive than the film world, with locations seen only briefly in the film opened out in the game, such as Coulter's apartment. Shiny had worked very closely with the filmmakers, and had received digital scans of costumes, cyberscans of the principal cast's faces, set designs, plans, and concept art to facilitate the cutscenes' graphical recreation of the film world as closely as possible. The developers had also shot footage of numerous animals in Wildlife WayStation, which would be used to create the many dæmons in the game, as well as footage of polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba. To ensure the animals in the game moved as realistically as possible, the real footage was animated over by the art department.





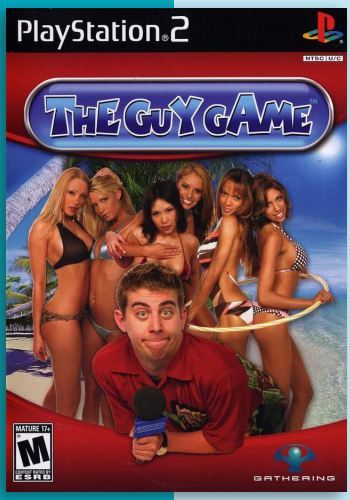
The Golden Compass received "generally unfavorable reviews" across every platform.

GameSpot's Kevin VanOrd rated the game 4.5 out of 10. He was highly critical of the plot, arguing that if players were unfamiliar with either the novel or the film, they would not be able to follow what is happening. He also criticized the controls and camera, especially during the platforming levels; *"Not only do the slippery controls make Lyra a pain to maneuver, but you can't manually control the camera, which makes it impossible to judge distance. Even worse, the camera has a tendency to move on its own in the middle of jumps and balancing acts."*

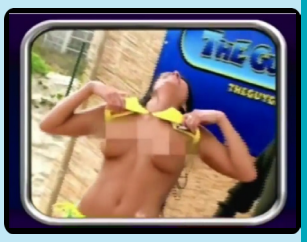
IGN's Martin Robinson rated it 4.5 out of 10. He was heavily critical of the deception and evasion minigames, and although he thought the Alethiometer gameplay was interesting, he felt its almost wholly optional nature in the game undermined it. He was most critical, however, of the plot; *"The story is a mess standing on its own. The game makes little attempt to portray Pullman's world, instead opting to magpie scenes from the film and career through the story with little concession for the player."*

The Guy Game

4.8

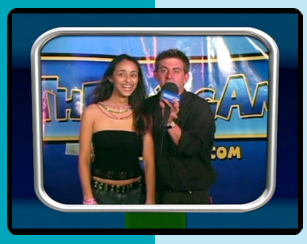


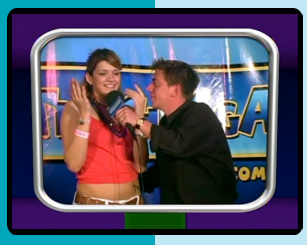
Developer	Top Heavy Studios
Publisher	Gathering
Release date	(us) August 31, 2004
Genre	Trivia
Mode	1-4 Players

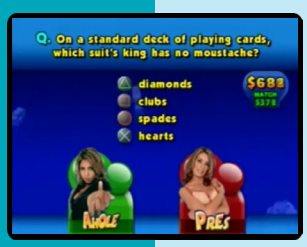


The Guy Game is an adult video game released for Windows, PlayStation 2, and Xbox in 2004. Presented in a trivia gameshow style supporting up to four players, it consists of about 1,000 questions spread out over 20 episodes.

After every question there is video footage—shot during spring break festivities on South Padre Island—of host Matt Sadler giving the same question to young females in bikinis (referred to as "hotties"). If they answer incorrectly, they are required to show their breasts. Before they give their answers, the footage is paused and the player is asked to guess whether the hotties answered correctly or not. In the "TitWitz" portions of the game, the player is told that they were wrong, and asked to guess what wrong answer they gave. The more times the player is able to correctly predict the outcome, the higher the "Flash-O-Meter" rises, and the more exposed the breasts become. At first, the breasts are obscured by a Guy Game logo ("Soft and Squishy" level), then just digitally blurred ("Sorta Chubby" level), and finally fully uncensored ("Super Stiff" level, maxed-out meter). Once the player reaches the uncensored level, the episode can be played again with no visual censorship. As the game progresses, the players are ranked as President, Vice President, Treasurer, or Asshole. Also included are the "Ballz" minigames which can give players extra points during an episode. Before the game, each player chooses a female avatar (called cheerleaders) to represent them. Based on how often the player correctly guesses the outcome of each hottie's response, the more clothes the cheerleader removes. At the end of the episode, a short video montage is shown of the cheerleader belonging to the player who reached the rank of President. Many other rules can be enabled, most inspired by drinking games.



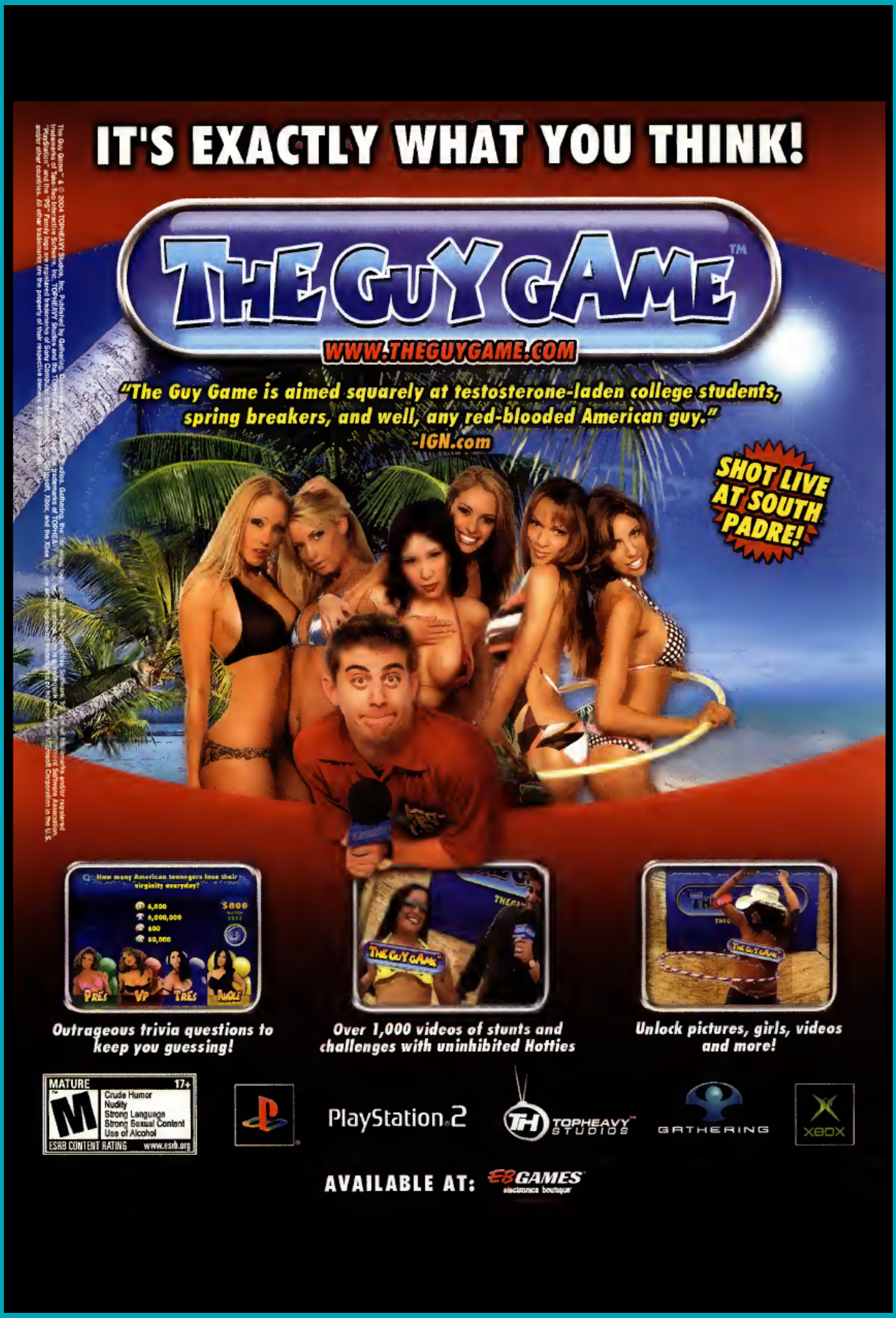




Four months after the game's release a lawsuit was brought against Topheavy Studios, Gathering of Developers, Sony, and Microsoft. A woman known as Diane in the game (who is found in Set 5, Episode 20) explained that she was not informed that footage would be used to promote the video game. At the time the footage was recorded, Diane was only seventeen years old, making her underage. A temporary restraining order was granted, prohibiting the further production of copies of the game that contained the girl's image, voice, and name.

After the lawsuit, developer Topheavy Studios released a DVD, The Guy Game: Game Over, which featured the footage filmed for the game as well as additional content and bonus features.

The Guy Game received generally unfavorable reviews across all three platforms, with the the PlayStation 2 version holding an aggregated Metacritic score of 48/100, based on 20 reviews.


IT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU THINK!
THE GUY GAME™
WWW.THEGUYGAME.COM
"The Guy Game is aimed squarely at testosterone-laden college students, spring breakers, and well, any red-blooded American guy."
-IGN.com
SHOT LIVE AT SOUTH PADRE!
Outrageous trivia questions to keep you guessing!
Over 1,000 videos of stunts and challenges with uninhibited Hotties
Unlock pictures, girls, videos and more!
MATURE 17+
Crude Humor
Nudity
Strong Language
Strong Sexual Content
Use of Alcohol
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org
PlayStation 2
TOPHEAVY STUDIOS
GATHERING
XBOX
AVAILABLE AT: EB GAMES electronics boutique

Gakuen Alice

7.4

Developer	Kids Station
Publisher	Kids Station
Release date	(jp) June 22, 2006
Genre	Visual novel, Action
Mode	1 Player

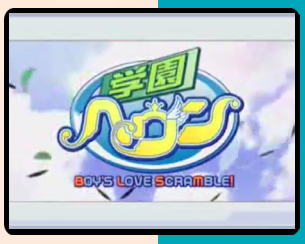
Gakuen Alice is based on a Japanese manga series written and illustrated by Tachibana Higuchi. As in most Japanese visual novels, players control a character who have lost their memory. Waking up in in the past, players find themselves a student of Gakuen Alice academy. During the week the players can choose 2 partners to help them to study and do different activities to increase the characters stats.

"psxdatacenter.com"

Gakuen Heaven: Boy's Love Scramble!

3.4

Developer	NEC Interchannel
Publisher	NEC Interchannel
Release date	(jp) November 27, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player



Gakuen Heaven: Boy's Love Scramble is a visual novel in which a male player character pursues relationships with other men, more widely known in Japan as a BL (boys' love) game. The story is told from the perspective of Keita Itō, an average teenager who by sheer luck is admitted into the prestigious Bell Liberty Academy.

"mobygames.com"

Gakuen Heaven: Boy's Love Scramble: Type B

Developer	NEC Interchannel
Publisher	NEC Interchannel
Release date	(jp) July 22, 2004
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Gakuen Heaven - Boy's Love Scramble Type B is sort of a Director's Cut of the first game features new scenes, CG & mini games that weren't in the first version of the game.

As in the first game, there are 10 characters which Keita can pursue a relationship with, each with different endings.

Gakuen Heaven: Okawari!

6.0

Developer	NEC Interchannel
Publisher	NEC Interchannel
Release date	(jp) February 24, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The story takes place three months after the first game. This time, Keita picked up a cursed ring that would take away his major ability luck. The characters are the same as in the PC Game and the objective this time is to find the way to release Keita from the curse of the ring. In addition to a number of scenarios where main character Keita interacts with his guy friends, players also find three different mini games.

J

Gakuen Toshi Vara Noir

7.0

J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) October 31, 2002
Genre	Simulation, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Gakuen Toshi Vara Noir: Kingdom of Chaos the Universe is an adventure video game by Idea Factory. The game features co-operative dungeon battling and a story based around multiple choice question progression.

A GameCube port and a OAV based on the game was later released.

Gakuen Utopia: Manabi Straight! KiraKira Happy Festa!

7.8

Developer	Marvelous Entertainment
Publisher	Marvelous
Release date	(jp) March 29, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

While the game consists of several different scenarios, the main one takes place during the summer festival. In the scenario, Manami needs the cooperation and comprehension of the town people in order to ensure the success of the event. Manami and her friends go through various missions in the game while they work and help the people in town get ready for the festival.

J

8.2

Galaxy Angel

J

Developer	Broccoli
Publisher	Broccoli
Release date	(jp) April 17, 2003
Genre	Visual novel, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

Galaxy Angel is the first game and first visual novel game in the Galaxy Angel series, developed and published by BROCCOLI. It is followed by the sequels Galaxy Angel Moonlit Lovers and Galaxy Angel Eternal Lovers.

Galaxy Angel is primarily a visual novel, punctuated with real-time tactics gameplay segments. The visual novel segments are fairly typical of the genre and straightforward; taking the role of the protagonist, Tact Mayers, the player reads through the dialogue, occasionally making a choice from several presented options that affect the flow of the story. Tact's overall goal is get to know the members of the Moon Angel Troupe. earning their trust and eventually pursuing a romantic relationship with one of them.

On occasion, the player will be given the freedom to move about the Elle Ciel, inspecting the various rooms and meeting the Angels. With the exception of the introductory tour, however, Tact can only spend 30 minutes touring the ship at a time, and each room visit takes five minutes, so the player must allocate time accordingly.

The decisions the player makes affect the morale and trust of the Angels towards Tact, in turn affecting their combat abilities. For this reason, the player should attempt to keep the Angels happy.

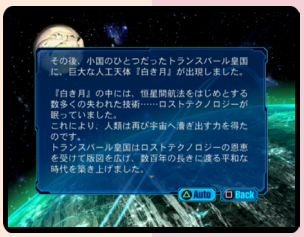
The combat segments take place in space, with the player takes command of the Elle Ciel and the Angel Troupe's Emblem Frames, as well as any Imperial Navy ships present. The goal is generally to eliminate all enemies while protecting the Elle Ciel, although some levels will have additional objectives.

Each ship has a varying amount of weapons (with differing damage, range and accuracy values), armor, speed, acceleration, mobility and evasion. Ships have three key stats: Health, Energy and Spirit.

A fan-made translation for this game was released on December 20, 2009, but has been taken down indefinitely as of May 24, 2013.

"galaxyangel.wikia.com"

Broccoli Best Quality



Galaxy Angel: Moonlit Lovers

7.8

Developer	Broccoli
Publisher	Broccoli
Release date	(jp) February 26, 2004
Genre	Visual novel, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

Galaxy Angel Moonlit Lovers is the second game in the Galaxy Angel series and is the sequel to Galaxy Angel. It continues the story of the first game, and introduces a sixth Angel, Chitose Karasuma.

The game was released in different packages. The first package included a pencil Board Jacket and a soundtrack CD with picture label. The second package came only with the CD and the budget version came with a deluxe sparkly sticker.

J

Galaxy Angel: Eternal Lovers

8.1

J

Developer	Seta Corporation
Publisher	Broccoli
Release date	(jp) February 24, 2005
Genre	Visual novel, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

Galaxy Angel: Eternal Lovers is the third game in the Galaxy Angel series and the final game of the first trilogy. It is the predecessor to the second trilogy, starting from Zettai Ryoiki no Tobira. It takes place 3 months after the confrontation with Nefuria and the advent of the Val-Fasq war where the arrival of two siblings from the apparently surviving civilization of EDEN sets events into motion to end the threat of the Val-Fasq.

Galaxy Angel II

"galaxyangel.wikia.com"

Galaxy Angel II was also released as three games. While the first game in the trilogy begins normally, the second and third games will have the player establish who Kazuya ended up with in the previous game. Adhering to the tradition of the series, a large portion of the Galaxy Angel II games remain a visual novel with combat segments mixed in. The player takes control of Kazuya Shiranami, the first male member of the new Rune Angel Wing stationed on the Luxiole and, like Tact from the previous trilogy, is responsible for maintaining the mental health of his teammates to ensure their best performance in the fights to come. The games are separated into a multitude of Chapters that are further separated into 4 acts, that can be selected to play from so as long as they were previously cleared. Akin to an anime, at the beginning and end of each Chapter, the selected Opening and the Ending theme for the game will play, often differing based on the Chapter's character focus.

Galaxy Angel II: Zettairyouiki no Tobira

7.9

Deluxe Pack

Developer	Seta Corporation
Publisher	Broccoli
Release date	(jp) June 22, 2006
Genre	Visual novel, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

J

Galaxy Angel II Zettai Ryōiki no Tobira is the first game of the Galaxy Angel II series that is set 4 years after the end of the previous game, Galaxy Angel Eternal Lovers. It features a brand new cast of Angels, the Rune Angel Troupe, and primarily takes place in a parallel universe called NEUE. The new Rune Angel Troupe features Emblem Frames from NEUE and act as the successor unit to the now disbanded Moon Angel Troupe. As for the parallel universe NEUE, it is linked to EDEN through a space called ABSOLUTE, which is the central hub to which all parallel universes are linked. This is connected to the title which roughly translates to Galaxy Angel II: The Door to Absolute.

The story begins with Kazuya Shiranami's arrival to the Luxiole as the newest and first male member of the newly formed Rune Angel Wing. When contact with Milfie inside ABSOLUTE is cut off and when previous Moon Angel Wing member Forte Stollen announces a coup d'etat on the NEUE capital planet of Seldar, Tact, Kazuya, and the Rune Angel Wing respond and are called into action.

8.3

Galaxy Angel II: Mugen Kairou no Kagi

J

Developer	Broccoli
Publisher	Broccoli
Release date	(jp) October 18, 2007
Genre	Visual novel, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

Galaxy Angel II Mugen Kairō no Kagi is the second Galaxy Angel II game, and it is the sequel to Zettai Ryōiki no Tobira. Two new members join the Rune Angel Troupe, Natsume Izayoi and Roselle Mateus. Taking place 6 months after the events of Verel's Insurrection, the crew find themselves In the midst of a reassignment upheaval. The Luxiole now act under the authority of the UPW and come into conflict against the Arms Alliance, a union of three planets that are outside of the Seldar Alliance. The Three Marquis challenge the Luxiole to their "game" while a bigger threat looms over them.

The title translates to Galaxy Angel II: Key to the Infinite Corridor.

The limited edition include a Special CD Angelic Disc vol.2, Galaxy Angel II Starter Book vol.2 and a metal emblem ring

8.2

Galaxy Angel II: Eigou Kaiki no Koku

Developer	Broccoli
Publisher	Broccoli
Release date	(jp) March 12, 2009
Genre	Visual novel, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

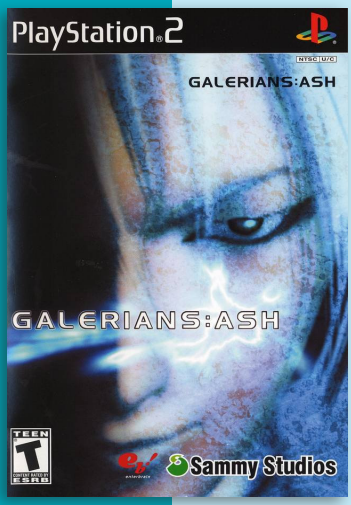
J

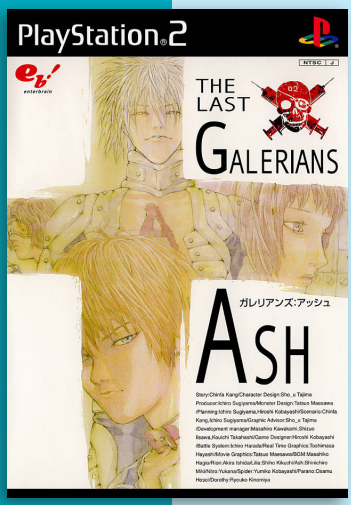
Galaxy Angel II Eigō Kaiki no Toki is the third Galaxy Angel II game and the final entry of the series. It is set 3 months after the events of the previous game, Mugen Kairō no Kagi. The combined Angel Wing join Tact on Juno in celebrating the 5 year anniversary since the liberation of the EDEN civilization from the Val-Fasq. The celebration comes to a quick end as the Will suddenly appear in the Val Vaross System near the Val-Fasq homeworld of Val-Rundal and the Rune Angel Wing are quickly scrambled into action as the final war against Will begins.

The limited edition include Encyclopedia GA and a necktie.

Galerians: Ash

5.0

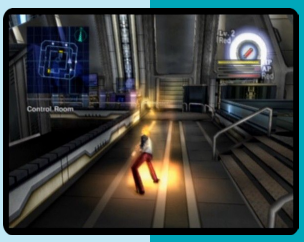


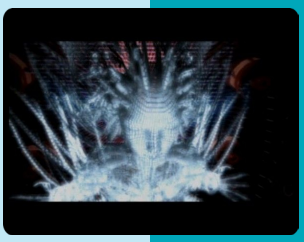


Developer	Polygon Magic
Publisher	Sammy Studios, (jp) Enterbrain
Release date	(jp) April 25, 2002
Genre	Survival horror
Mode	1 Player

Galerians: Ash continues directly the story told in the first Galerians. Five hundred years into the future, an ultra-intelligent mother computer named Dorothy was given the responsibility of managing humans' lives. However, the computer's mind told her the humans must be destroyed as weak, imperfect beings, and a race of super-humans, the Galerians, must be created. But Rion, the hero of the first game, destroyed Dorothy in a dramatic battle. Now Rion is brought back to life and learns that Dorothy was able to execute a destructive program before her death. Once again, Rion must face and defeat Dorothy's creations, the Galerians.

The gameplay is similar to that of its preceding game, complementing a traditional survival horror scheme with the protagonist's unique abilities. Rion can fight enemies using various psychic techniques. The more he uses a technique, and the more damage he sustains, the more "addicted" he becomes, and when the addiction meter reaches the limit, his hit points get gradually depleted, and he cannot walk normally anymore. Like in other survival horror games, the protagonist relies heavily on healing and restoring items. Enemies also drop items that will raise Rion's maximum hit points or make his weapons stronger.





J N P

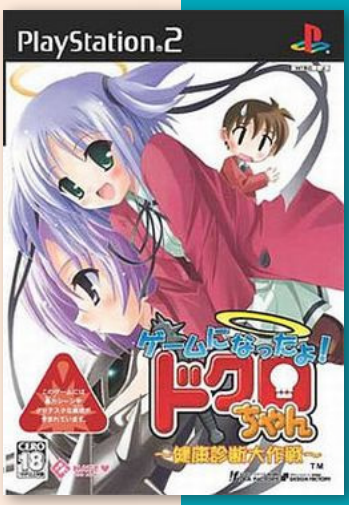
Game ni Nattayo! Dokuru-chan

7.0

J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) November 10, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

This game is based on the manga Bludgeoning Angel Dokuro-Chan. The game was given an 18+ rating, because of highly disturbing violence and nudity. In the game, Sakura meets a new angel named Benomu. The game is set up as a visual novel where the player has to pick which opinions to go with. Even though this game features voices, the minor characters still remains un-voiced, which results in only viewing text.



Gambler Densetsu Tetsuya: Kurouto Choujou Kessen

8.1

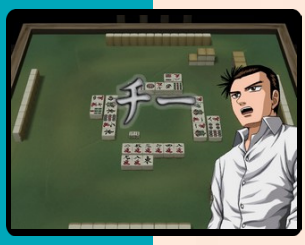
Developer	Athena
Publisher	Athena
Release date	(jp) July 3, 2003
Genre	Board, Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Gambler Densetsu Tetsuya - Kurouto Choujou Kessen an installment in the Japanese mahjong series. The game includes two gameplay modes, a scenario battle mode in which the player advance through the game's plot defeating opponents and a free battle mode in which the player can play against the opponents that he defeats in the scenario mode.

"psxdatacenter.com"

Gambler Densetsu Tetsuya Digest

8.0



Developer	Athena
Publisher	Athena
Release date	(jp) May 27, 2004
Genre	Board, Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Gambler Densetsu Tetsuya Digest is a mahjong game from Athena. This instalment in the mahjong series features four scenarios - players have conversations with the roster of 26 characters while trying to beat them in the board game. In addition to its large cast, the game includes three gameplay modes, a scenario battle mode, a free battle mode, and a survival battle mode.

Gambler Densetsu Tetsuya

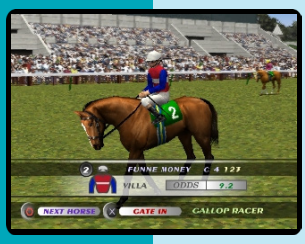
7.8

Developer	Athena
Publisher	Athena
Release date	(jp) June 21, 2001
Genre	Board, Adventure
Mode	1 Player

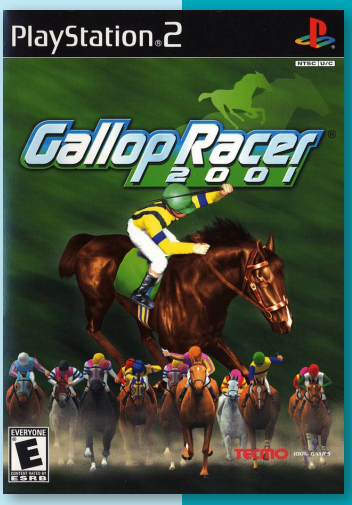
Gambler Densetsu Tetsuya is another mahjong game in the Gambler Densetsu Tetsuya series. Players once again take the role of a mahjong player and play through a story by beating different opponents. The game also feature different anime cut-scenes that helps the story progress.

Gallop Racer 2001

7.1



Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo
Release date	(jp) March 29, 2001
Genre	Simulation, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

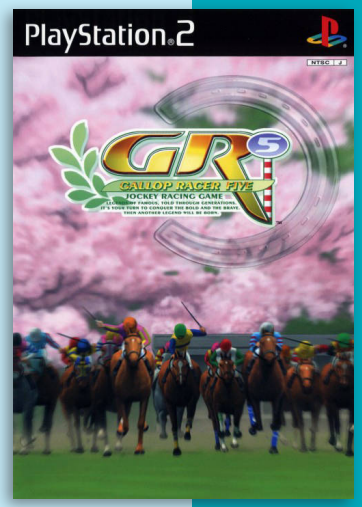


Gallop Racer 2001 is the first in the series to make it's appearance on the PlayStation 2 console. The player can partake in a simulation where, as an owner of a stable, they can buy, sell, retire and breed various race horses throughout their career while training and conditioning them along the way. The player will start out with a small amount of Jockey Points that act as currency in this game, using this to start out their stable by buying a horse and entering them in races. Depending how well their horses and jockeys perform during races, they can continue to expand their empire and become the best in the business.

The player can also become the jockey and use their horse to win races in a variety of tracks. The player must play to their horse's strengths and avoid exposing their weaknesses through various weather conditions. If the player and horse does well enough, the horse's attributes can change after the match, but also be affected negatively if they do poorly.

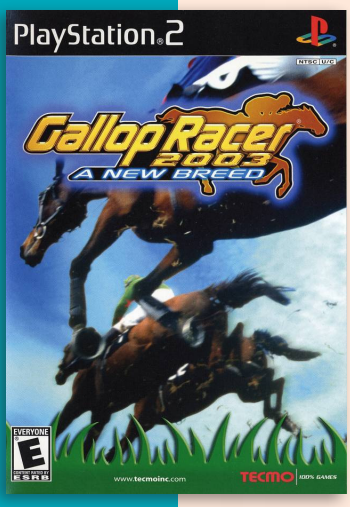
There is also a Practice mode where the player can learn how to play the game through the various modes and even have the ability to bet on horse races, however this can only be done on this mode. Players can also go head-to-head in a split-screen.

"mobygames.com"

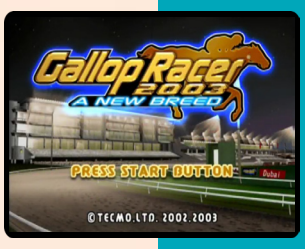


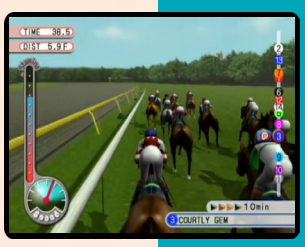
Gallop Racer 2003: A New Breed

6.8



Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo, (eu) Zoo Digital Publishing
Release date	(jp) December 12, 2002
Genre	Simulation, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players





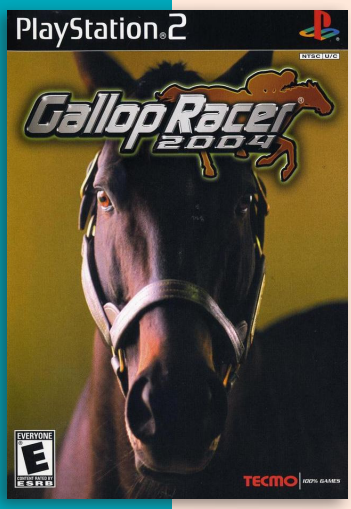
Gallop Racer 2003 is an update of it's previous incarnations with the standard modes (exhibition and season mode) and has six different jockeys to choose for the players character in the season mode as well as 32 different tracks and over 3000 different horses.

Players can breed horses using a series of mini-games and bet on races in the season mode.

"mobygames.com"

Gallop Racer 2004

7.0



Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo, (eu) Zoo Digital Publishing
Release date	(jp) February 19, 2004
Genre	Simulation, Sports
Mode	1-4 Players

GR 2004 is an update of its predecessor, with more tracks and horses to choose from as well as an revamped camera system along with the betting system from previous games and the same gameplay. It features the same modes from others like exhibition and season mode with the ability for players to breed up too eight different horses at one time in season mode. It also features a multiplayer tournament.

J N P

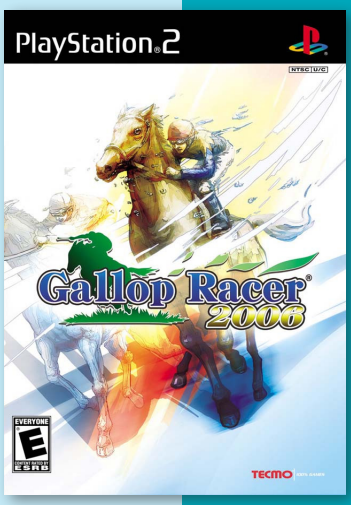
Gallop Racer 2006

6.9

J N

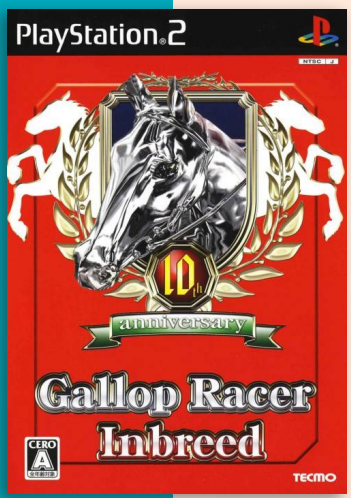
Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo
Release date	(jp) December 15, 2005
Genre	Simulation, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Gallop Racer 2006, is the perennial update of the Gallop Racer series, with the standard gaming modes: Exhibition and Career, along with new modes such as Memorial Quest, where players can partake in over a 100 classic horse races from past years and Field of Legend, where players can test their created horses against actually horses from past years of horse racing.



Gallop Racer Inbreed

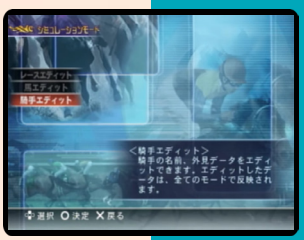
5.5



Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo
Release date	(jp) November 2, 2006
Genre	Simulation, Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

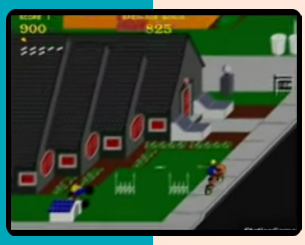
Gallop Racer Inbreed merges the two previously released titles; Gallop Racer 2004, released as Gallop Racer Lucky 7 in Japan, and Gallop Racer 2006, released as Gallop Racer 8: Live Horse Racing, into one game.

New inclusions are more races and racehorses. And the contents of Memorial mode was also updated.



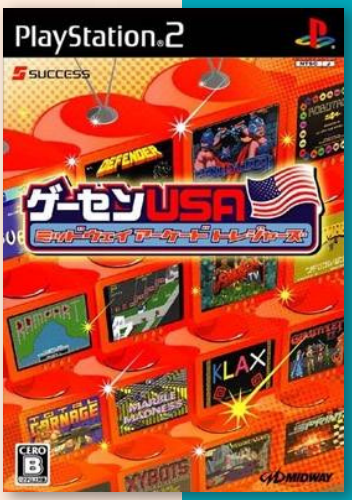
J

Game Center USA



J

Developer	Success
Publisher	Success
Release date	(jp) September 21, 2006
Genre	Compilation
Mode	1-2 Players



Game Center USA: Midway Arcade Treasures is a collection of 32 games chosen from the first two Midway Arcade Treasure games, released exclusively in Japan for PlayStation 2.

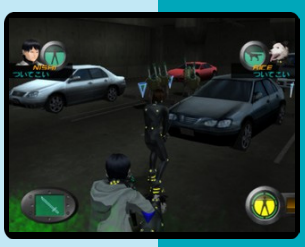
Games included are;

- Gauntlet
- Klax
- Marble Madness
- 720°
- Super Sprint
- Cyberball 2072
- Kozmik Krooz'r
- Gauntlet II
- Rampart
- Road Blasters
- Robotron 2084
- Arch-Rivals
- Bubbles
- Hard Drivin'
- Paperboy
- Pit-Fighter
- Satans Hollow
- Vindicators
- Xenophobe
- Spy Hunter
- Spy Hunter II
- Championship Sprint
- Timber
- Toobin
- Total Carnage
- Wacko
- Xybots
- A.P.B.
- Splat!
- Joust
- Joust 2: Survival of the Fittest
- Root Beer Tapper

Gantz: The Game

7.3

Developer	KCEJ
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 17, 2005
Genre	Third-person shooter, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player



J

Based on a manga and anime, this action game places players in the shoes of main character Kurou as he face off against invading aliens in 3D battles set in locations pulled from the source material. The players choices in the game's conversation and story sequences affect the path through the game. In addition to raising and lowering his trust amongst friends, different choices earns players varying amounts of "Hero Points," giving him more powerful super moves in battle, and "Leader Points," giving him added ability to command his battle partners. The game also includes extras including Free Play mode, a Mini Mode, Magazine Browser mode, Gantz Rankings, a special preview movie and the completion statistic.

Game Select 5 Wa

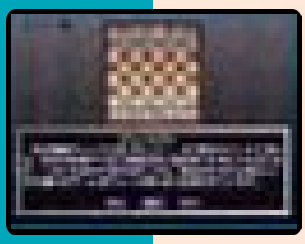
Developer	Yuki
Publisher	Yuki
Release date	(jp) September 28, 2000
Genre	Board
Mode	1-2 Players

Game Select 5 Wa is a board game, published by Yuki, which was released in Japan in 2000.

The game contains five Japanese table games. RPG mode/story mode feature a beginner mode for new players.

J

Game Select 5 You

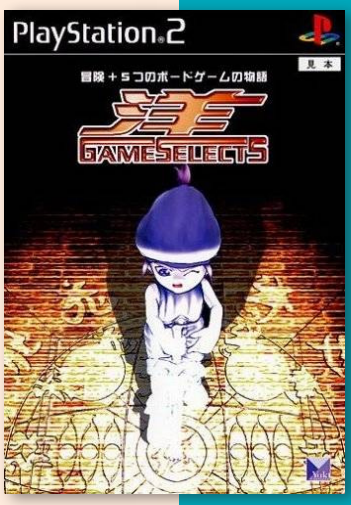


J N P

Developer	Yuki
Publisher	Yuki
Release date	(jp) January 25, 2001
Genre	Board
Mode	1-2 Players

Game Select 5 You is a board game, published by Yuki, which was released in Japan in 2001.

This release contains western board games, such as Chess, Reversi, Blackjack, Poker, Millionaire, Checker and Backgammon. Like the previous title, this game also feature a story mode.



Games Galaxy 2

3.0

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2006
Genre	Mini-games
Mode	1-2 Players

Games Galaxy 2 is a compilation/mini-games, developed and published by Phoenix Games, which was released in Europe in 2006.

The game feature 25 simple mini-games. The mini-games consist of different puzzle games, mind games and arcade style games. Most of the games include a 2-player mode.

The game is considered a hard-to-get title.

P

Garfield

6.6

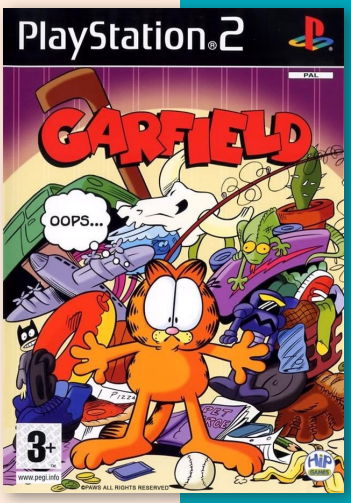
Developer	The Code Monkeys
Publisher	Hip Games
Release date	(eu) November 19, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

The game takes place entirely inside Garfield's house which is presented in full 3-D.

Garfield and Odie has to clean the house before Jon comes home. It's particularly difficult for cats and dogs to use cleaning equipment and supplies... but players can find a way to use a vacuum cleaner and other objects.

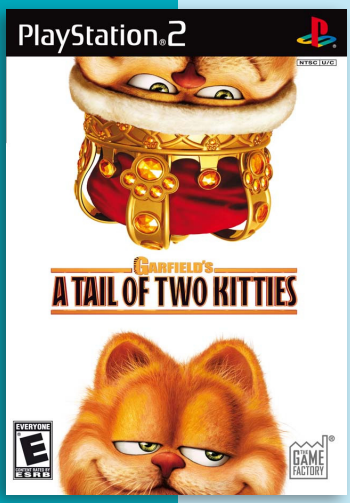
Puzzles come in the form of "mini games.

"mobygames.com"



Garfield: A Tail of Two Kitties

7.3



Developer	Asobo Studio
Publisher	The Game Factory
Release date	Action-platformer
Genre	(eu) October 6, 2006
Mode	1 Player

Based on the move with the same name, players take the role of Garfield. Gameplay is based around 3D platform games mechanics. The player takes control of Garfield and his fellow animals: Christophe the goose and Claudius the mouse in order to explore the five non-linear levels of the huge castle complex, helping other inhabitants on his way and participating in various activities including: racing, time challenges, mazes and dances.

N P

Garfield: Lasagna World Tour

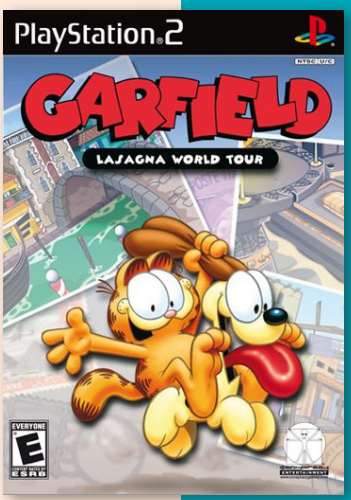
2.9

N P

Developer	Eko Software
Publisher	Blast! Ent., (us) Conspiracy Entertainment
Release date	(eu) November 30, 2007
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

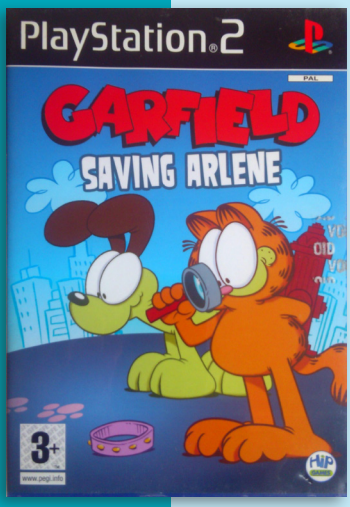
Lasagna World Tour is a sequel to the 2006 platformer Garfield: Saving Arlene. Players control the titular orange tabby cat as he, with the help of his pal Odie, sets out throughout the world on a treasure hunt (in order to obtain a lifetime's worth of lasagna).

Along with minor gameplay improvements, this sequel includes numerous power-ups in the form of costumes.



Garfield: Saving Arlene

6.1



Developer	Eko Software
Publisher	Titus Software, (eu) Hip Games
Release date	(jp) April 27, 2006
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

In this game, Garfield and Odie travel through a 3D world solving puzzles that involve doors, keys, but also team-based actions with his partner.

Next to the regular moves, Garfield can also gain special powers based on his eating habits: big burger kicks, healing lasagna, etc. Players cannot control Odie, who is invincible, directly, unless a second players hops in, but players can give him orders by whistling or kicking him.

J P

Garouden Breakblow

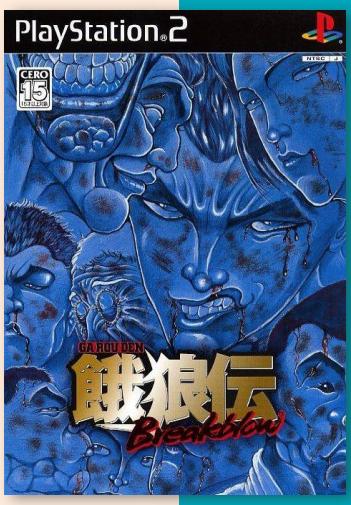
7.9

J

Developer	Opus
Publisher	ESP Software, (ko) Entertainment Soft. Republic
Release date	(jp) November 17, 2005
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

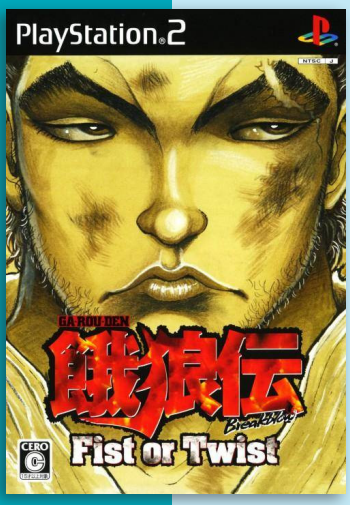
Ga-rou-den Breakblow is a 3D fighting game based on a manga. Players can choose from a variety of martial arts experts, each with their own special techniques and special moves. There is a focus on grappling and submission moves, and unlike most fighting games, the two combatants share a life bar which will move back and forth depending on performance, and granting the use of different special moves.

"mobygames.com"



Garouden Breakblow: Fist or Twist

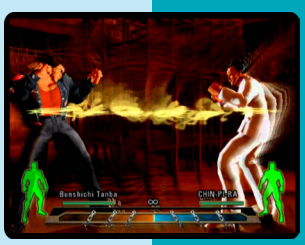
8.0



Developer	Opus
Publisher	ESP Software
Release date	(jp) March 15, 2007
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

The sequel features 22 characters. It feature no juggles, no combos, no high jumps, etc. and Injuries are sustained throughout the matches. Each of the three special moves for each character has have different properties. Throws in this game aren't "instant damage" moves like in other fighting games.

"sukotsuto.livejournal.com"



J

Garou: Mark of the Wolves

8.4

SNK Best Collection

Limited Edition

J

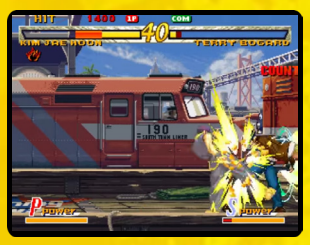
Developer	SNK Playmore
Publisher	SNK Playmore
Release date	(jp) June 30, 2005
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Garou: Mark of the Wolves or Fatal Fury: Mark of the Wolves for the Dreamcast release; referred to as Garou or MOW for short, it is the ninth game in the Fatal Fury series set ten years after the death of Geese Howard. It is known for pushing the graphical capabilities of the Neo Geo, utilizing 3D graphics and semi-transparency, as well as its well-balanced roster of characters and highly technical gameplay.

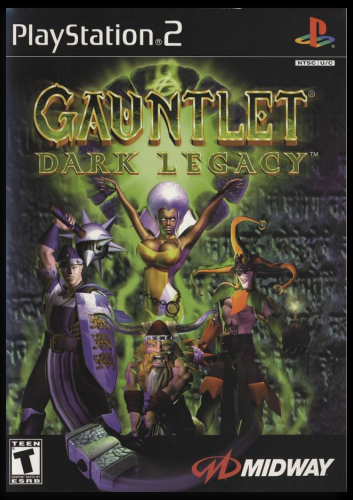
The two-plane system in which characters would fight from two different planes was removed from the game. The game introduces the "Tactical Offense Position" (T.O.P.) which is a special area on the life gauge. When the gauge reaches this area, the character enters the T.O.P. mode, granting the player character the ability to use T.O.P. attack, gradual life recovery, and increased attack damage. The game also introduced the "Just Defend" system, which rewards players who successfully block an attack at the last moment with a small amount of health recovery and the ability to immediately counterattack out of block stun. (Just Defend was later added as a feature of K-Groove in Capcom's Capcom vs. SNK 2.) Similar to previous titles, players are given a fighting rank after every round. If the players manages to win all rounds from the Arcade Mode with at least a rank of "AAA", the player will face the boss Kain R. Heinlein, which unlocks an ending once defeating him. If the requirements are not met, then Grant will be the final boss and there will not be a special ending. Additionally, through Arcade Mode, before facing Grant, the player will face a mid-boss which can be any character from the cast depending on the character the player uses.

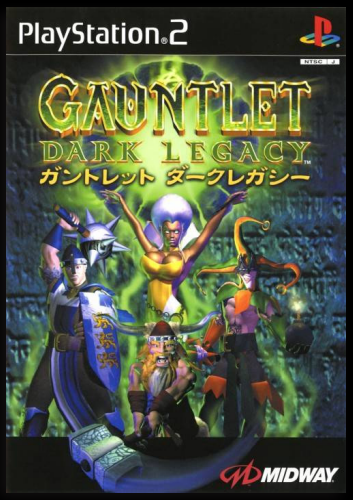
The PlayStation 2 port was rereleased in the title of "NeoGeo Online Collection". The "Limited Edition" included a Neo Stick 2 controller.

In July 2016, SNK announced the game would be ported to the PlayStation 4 and PlayStation Vita. This was done as a result of a poll in which the company asked fans which "classic" title would they like to see in PlayStation Network.



7.3





J N P

Gauntlet Dark Legacy

Developer	Midway
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) May 1, 2001
Genre	Action, Beat-'em-up
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Gauntlet Dark Legacy was originally released to arcades in 2000. It is the fourth title in the Gauntlet series, and is an expansion of the previous title in the series, Gauntlet Legends. Elements from Dark Legacy were integrated into the Dreamcast port of Gauntlet Legends. A direct port to the PlayStation 2 was later released.

There are eight characters to initially choose from: the Warrior, the Valkyrie, the quick-footed Archer, the Wizard, the spellcasting Sorceress, the Knight, the Dwarf, and the chaotic Jester. In addition, there are eight alternative-modes for these characters to unlock, plus dozens of secret characters to obtain. With a multi-tap, up to four players can play, with rules governing how much they can hurt each other

Gauntlet Dark Legacy, although an expansion to Gauntlet Legends, is played much differently. In addition to the new characters, players can now fire both slow and fast attacks. The player has an option of performing a slow, strong attack, or a quick, weaker attack, as opposed to Legends, where there is only one type of attack. In Gauntlet Dark Legacy, the player can perform combos by using slow attacks and quick attacks in sequence. Combos are much stronger than normal attacks, and are usually capable of taking out several enemies at once. In Legends, each player has a turbo gauge that refills itself slowly and automatically. This turbo gauge allows the player to use turbo attacks, attacks that are stronger than the normal ones. When the turbo gauge is empty, no turbo attacks can be used until it filled up again. Dark Legacy keeps the turbo gauge, but expands on it, allows two players standing adjacent to each other to perform a combination turbo attack together, usually packing a lot of force (and draining half of the turbo gauge of the player that initiated the combination turbo).

The way a player uses items is somewhat different from the first game. The player can gather items from the levels, which are activated immediately. The items provide benefits and disappear within a set time. In Legends, "power-up" items were activated the moment they were obtained with the same duration needing intervention from the player to turn them off in the item menu. They could then be accessed at will. However, in Dark Legacy, the power-ups cannot be deactivated once collected. More items are available in the shop in Dark Legacy (with very high prices) and the old items' prices were changed. This places more emphasis on the decision of what item to buy, as usually the player can only afford one or two. Items bought in the shop between levels are activated as soon as the player enters another level.

In Dark Legacy, the player has the added abilities of blocking, charging, and strafing. Strafing allows the player to constantly face one direction and fire medium-speed attacks. Blocking causes the player's character to stand still in a defensive position for a second or two. Any melee attacks made against the player are negated or do significantly less damage. Charging

makes the player run forward with his weapon functioning like a lance while simultaneously blocking. The player can kill the enemies ahead of him while blocking their attacks. However, charging does consume a bit of the turbo gauge each time it is used.

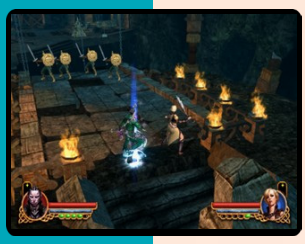
However, the game still has identifiable roots with the original Gauntlet games. The way to go about most levels is to simply run along a designated path, destroying enemies before they can kill the player. Like Gauntlet and Gauntlet II, enemies spawn from Generators. Only when the Generator is destroyed will the enemies stop spawning. Some Generators will take multiple hits to destroy; as the Generator is weakened, it will spawn less powerful enemies, until it is destroyed completely. There are some, but very few, levels that have a maze-like aspect to them, and are thus hard to navigate to the exit. Most levels however have the path to the end easily in sight, with separate side paths that are harder to access. Usually these side paths lead to important items, such as a lot of treasure, a Legendary Weapon, or a Runestone. Some levels, such as the first level of a realm, will have a short movie before the level loads. These can either serve to introduce the player to any new types of enemies appearing on that particular level, or to alert the player that a Legendary Weapon is hidden somewhere in the level. Runestones are not hinted at in movies, although if a level that has a Runestone is exited without the Runestone being found, an evil laugh will be heard. Food still recovers health in Dark Legacy as it did in Gauntlet II, with the type of food restoring different amounts of health. Treasure is also a rarity in Dark Legacy, as it is used to purchase items at the store. This is a difference from the earlier Gauntlet games, as in their levels treasure was everywhere,

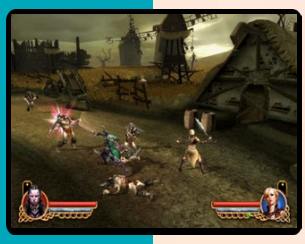
and it gave extra points, but it did not serve any other purpose.

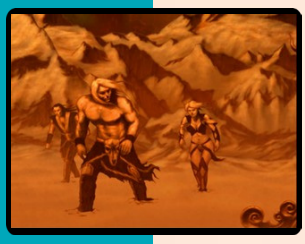
Gauntlet Dark Legacy was met with good to mediocre reviews. Of all the console versions of the game, the PlayStation 2 version was the most well-received, with a score of 31 out of 40 from Famitsu, and an average score of 70.77% on GameRankings and 73 out of 100 from Metacritic. The GameCube and Xbox versions, which were both built off the PS2 version and released a year later, received less favorable score averages. Even though these versions added new features to the game, such as the ability to save power-ups for later use, their number of glitches was reportedly greater.

5.9

Gauntlet: Seven Sorrows





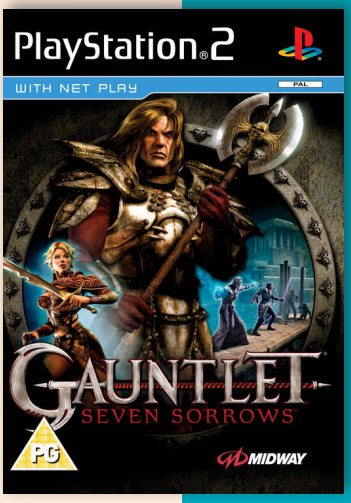


Developer	Midway
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) December 12, 2005
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Gauntlet: Seven Sorrows is the follow-up to Gauntlet Legends and Gauntlet Dark Legacy. It fuses fantasy fighting action with the strategic RPG collecting and customization elements for solo play, co-op and an online community.

The game features the four original heroes: the wizard, the elf, the warrior, and the Valkyrie, each wielding many combos and special attacks that can be purchased at the end of each world. Unlike the previous Gauntlet game, Gauntlet Dark Legacy, there are only four characters, with no unlockable hidden characters and no character appearance customization available. There is also no longer a central hub world where players can upgrade their characters and choose which world to enter next. Upgrading is instead done at the end of each world, and cannot be accessed from the menu, nor is there a shop where items can be purchased.

Industry veterans John Romero and Josh Sawyer initially spearheaded Midway's San Diego studio, intent on reviving the Gauntlet action role-playing game franchise. Romero and Sawyer both left Midway Games before the completion of this title. The two characters created by Romero and Sawyer, Lancer and Tragedian, were removed from the final game.



N P

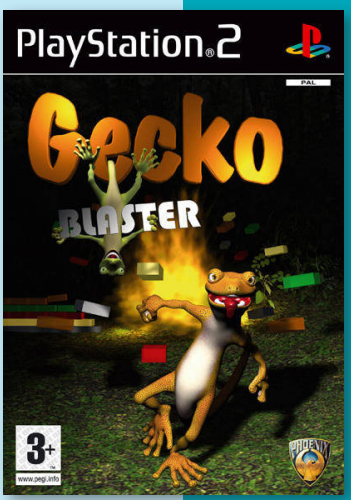
5.0

Gecko Blaster

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) December 1, 2007
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

Gecko Blaster is an Action game, developed and published by Phoenix Games, which was released in Europe in 2007.

The game apparently feature 50 randomly generated levels spread across 5 different visual themes.



P

Gegege no Kitarou: Ibun Youkai Kitan

4.7

Developer	WinkySoft
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) December 11, 2003
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

GeGeGe no Kitarō is an RPG based on a manga series created in 1960 by Shigeru Mizuki. The game was apparently released as a annaversery celebrating Shigeru Mizuki 80th year old age.

The game focuses on the young Kitarō — the last survivor of the Ghost Tribe — and his adventures with other ghouls and strange creatures of Japanese mythology.

J

Gekibo 2

7.5

Developer	Irem
Publisher	Irem, (eu) Virgin Interactive
Release date	(jp) December 27, 2001
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

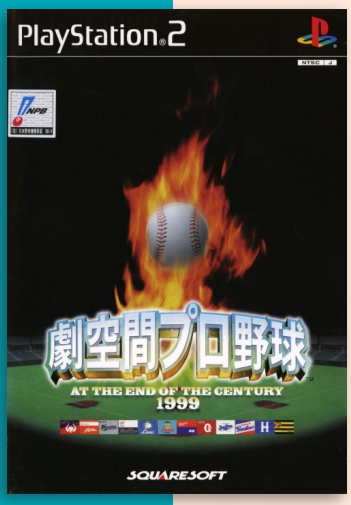
The game is a sequel to a Turbografx 16 game. The game is centered on taking photographs of things going on around the main character.

There may be a PAL version of the game named Polaroid Pete, but the publishing company for the PAL regions went bankrupt literally days before it scheduled to hit stores. It is rumored that the game saw limited distribution or was given away, making a PAL copy of this game incredibly rare.

J

Gekikuukan Pro Baseball: The End of the Century 1999

7.6



Developer	SquareSoft
Publisher	SquareSoft
Release date	(jp) September 7, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

This game have the game have the distinction of being SquareSoft's first PlayStation 2 sports title. It also happens to be the first baseball game that Square has ever attempted. Features for the game include: 11 officially licensed stadiums, complete player rosters for the 1999 season, a broadcast-style presentation, and facial expressions that are reactionary to the on-field action.

J

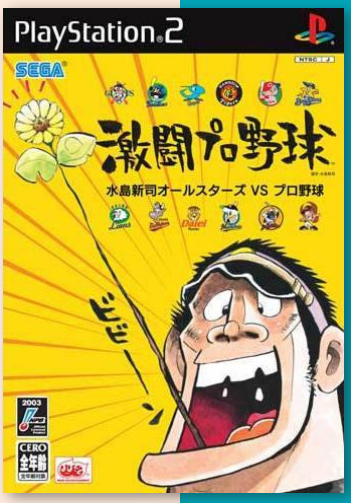
Gekitou Pro Yakyuu

8.0

Developer	Wow Entertainment
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(jp) September 11, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

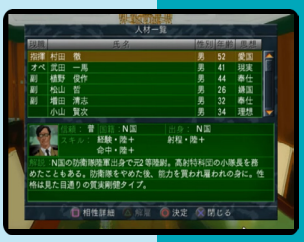
Gekitou Baseball feature over 30 cel shaded characters from Shinji Mizushima's baseball manga, as well as over 300 real life J-League baseball players that are traditionally modeled and textured.

The game pit the manga players against the real life players in a battle for baseball supremacy.



Gendai Daisenryaku: Isshoku Sokuhatsu - Gunji Balance Houkai

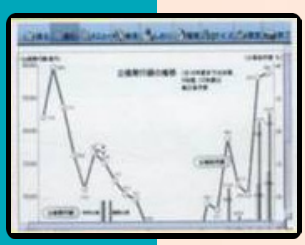
8.3



Developer	SystemSoft
Publisher	SystemSoft
Release date	(jp) August 27, 2009
Genre	Strategy
Mode	1 Player

Gendai Daisenryaku: Isshoku Sokuhatsu - Gunji Balance Houkai is a strategy game, developed and published by SystemSoft, which was released in Japan in 2009. The game includes 70 unique scenarios and several different modes, like "World Battle Mode" and "Modern Great Strategy". The game also feature over 500 different types of weapons.

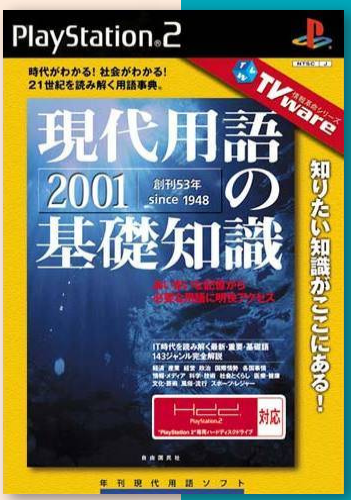
Gendai Yougo no Kiso Chishiki 2001



Developer	Jiyukokuminsha
Publisher	Artdink
Release date	(jp) December 6, 2001
Genre	Miscellaneous
Mode	1 Player

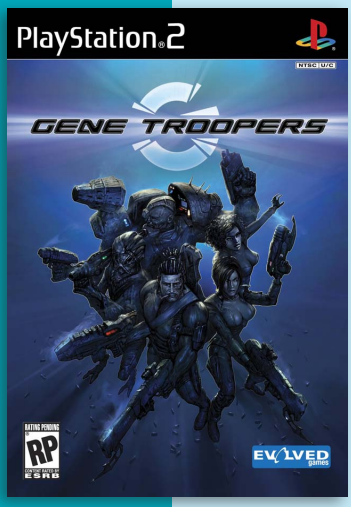
This software is a dictionary, published by Artdink, which was released in Japan in 2001. The software consists of information on various topics such as politics, industry, economy, international situation, science, art, sports, life and trends. Users can also search for topics.

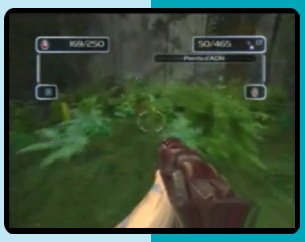
It is compatible with both a gamepad or a USB keyboard and mouse.



Gene Troopers

2.3





Developer	Cauldron Ltd.
Publisher	Playlogic
Release date	(us) December 25, 2006
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

Gene Troopers is basically a shooter but it lets players build and upgrade their weapons with stuff they`ll find lying around. Players can also extract the genes of an enemy to upgrade their own. With these codes they can choose in which direction they want to go with their character. This means players can either choose to upgrade the stealth abilities or to devote them to becoming a fighter.

"mobygames.com"

N P

George of the Jungle and the Search for the Secret

3.0

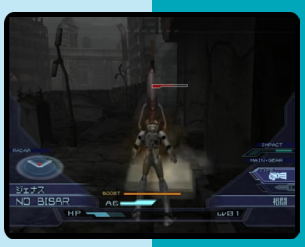
N P

Developer	Crave
Publisher	Crave, (eu) Ignition Entertainment
Release date	(us) March 18, 2008
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

The game is based on the George of the Jungle, the 2007 cartoon series. The game is in 3D but plays like a 2D side scrolling platformer game with 3D turns and camera angles in the environment and the path that George walks on. There are a total of 6 levels; 2 with a jungle theme, 2 with a swamp theme, and 2 with temple theme. All 6 levels are made to look like the cartoon series.

Get Ride! AMDriver: Soukoku no Shinjitsu

7.7



Developer	WinkySoft
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 24, 2005
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1 Player

The game is a beat-'em-up based on an anime. Playing as a warrior called AMDriver, the players goal is to protect the people from a mysterious invader. Working with partner characters, they'll have to clear missions set in cities, buildings and even outer space. Prior to the start of a mission, they can purchase items from a shop in order to build up their character.

"ign.com"

J

Generation of Chaos

7.8

J

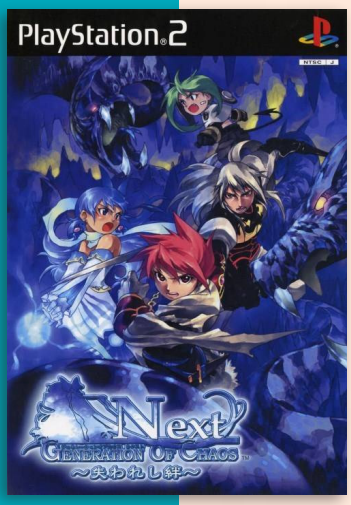
Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) August 9, 2001
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Generation of Chaos is a turn-based strategy RPG fantasy game. It is part of a fictional universe called Neverland, which includes other Idea Factory series such as Spectral Souls.

The gameplay combines on the one hand the resource management of the main kingdom. The typical combat strategy of the genre through a turn-based system where we see our units deployed on the map from a zenith perspective.

Generation of Chaos Next

7.5



Developer	Neverland
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) April 25, 2002
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

This was the second game in the Generation of Chaos series. The game is centred around the adventures of Elil and Rosie in an war-torn Neverland.

The Limited edition includes an OAV that acts as a prologue to the game.

J

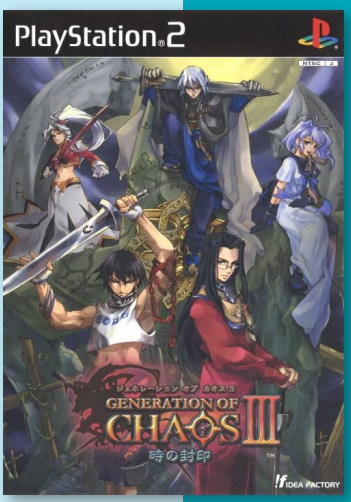
Generation of Chaos III: Toki no Fuuin

8.5

J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) May 8, 2003
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

In Generation of Chaos III the player has to create a hegemony on a previously unknown continent. They can build their strength by searching dungeons located in their own territory for future companions and treasures. In battle mode, it's the obvious aim to enlarge the players own territory at the cost of their rivals.



Generation of Chaos IV

8.5

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) April 22, 2004
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Generation of Chaos is another in the turn-based strategy RPG fantasy series, Generation of Chaos.

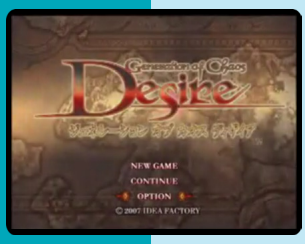
The Limited Edition of Shinten Makai: Generation of Chaos IV came in a large cardbaord box and contained a History Book, Japanese Phone Card and a Visual Novel DVD.

A PSP port, released as a side story of the PS2 version, was the first in the series to reach players in North America.

J

Generation of Chaos Desire

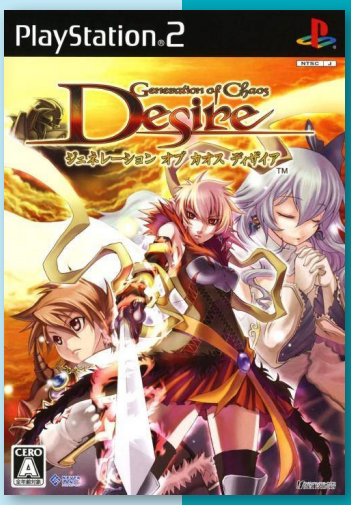
8.4



J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) September 27, 2007
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Generation of Chaos: Desire is a 2007 release in the Generation of Chaos series for PlayStation 2. The game is apparently a remake of sort of the two games; Generation of Chaos and Generation of Chaos NEXT, but with a improved battle system.



Getsumento Heiki Mina: Futatsu no Project M

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) July 26, 2007
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Getsumento Heiki Mina (Lunar Rabbit Weapon Mina) is based on a anime which appeared in the miniseries Densha Otoko. The game is broken up into an interactive portion and a battle-tactics portion where action cards are used to attack and trigger special skills. Players take on the role of an original character named Doctor Tsukikage who interacts with the girls of the Rabbit Force.

J

7.4

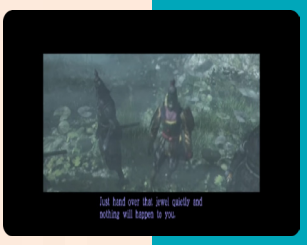
Genji: Dawn of the Samurai

J N P

Developer	Game Republic
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(jp) June 30, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Genji: Dawn of the Samurai (released as Genji in PAL territories) is loosely based on The Tale of the Heike. The story follows the adventures of Minamoto Yoshitsune as he descends from his mountain retreat and eventually embraces a quest to defeat the Taira clan, thereby avenging his father.

Gameplay is third-person combat, similar to what is found in the Dynasty Warriors series and Shinobi 2. The player controls Yoshitsune or Benkei, and both characters are equipped with two basic attacks: Normal and Special. Yoshitsune is an archetypical fast and agile warrior, making up in speed what he lacks in strength. He is able to jump on small platforms. He wields two swords, and can double jump, and use his sword to hang on ledges. Benkei is the more powerful but slower character, with greater range than Yoshitsune. He uses a large war club, which can also be used to destroy certain structures and heavy doors in the game. Players can improve their characters by collecting experience and leveling up or by using Essences of Amahagane. Yoshitsune and Benkei both have a number of kamui bars under their health bar. While in battle, the character's kamui bar stores power for the player to release devastating attacks.



5.6

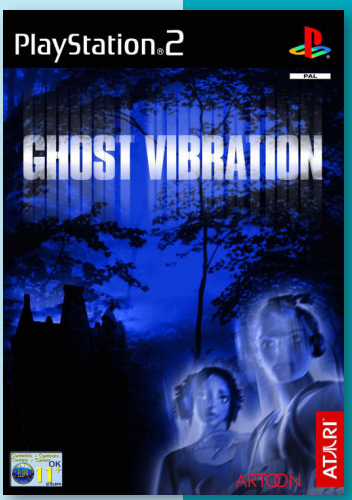
Ghost Vibration

J P

Developer	Artoon
Publisher	Eidos Interactive, (eu) Atari
Release date	(jp) July 4, 2002
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

In this first person shooter on rails players take the role of George, a ghost hunter, accompanied by his childhood friend and scientist Alicia. He have to exterminate the ghosts that inhabit an old mansion using a special weapon called Spirit Gun. After capturing the various spirits players can read their memories and use this information to solve the mysteries of this ancient mansion.

"mobygames.com"



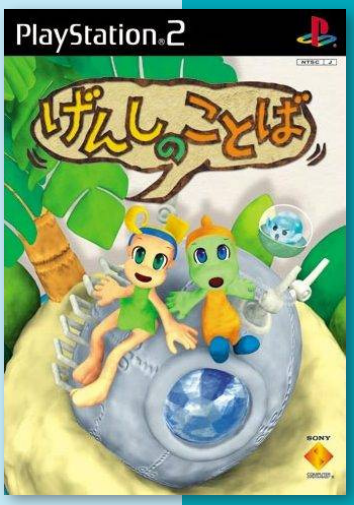
Genshi no Kotoba

Developer	SCEI
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) October 18, 2001
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Genshi No Kotoba was created by Yukio Futatsugi, creator of the Panzer Dragoon series. This was his only game on a PlayStation platform. According to him the game was “a very Sony-esque casual game”.

The game follows the story of an alien that when going on a trip with a group of scientics, crash on a water planet. So now he got to repair his ship and return home. To help him in his quest, specially in the conversations with the natives of the island, he will have the help of a little flying alien that will try to teach him with the translations.

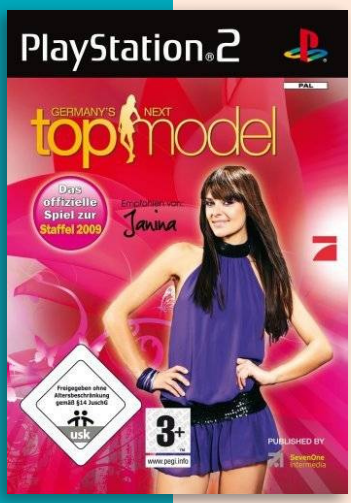
In the game the player can talk to the people on the island using emoticons. The basic of the gameplay is to combine different emoticons to advance in the conversations with the characters. The game is divided into 7 chapters.

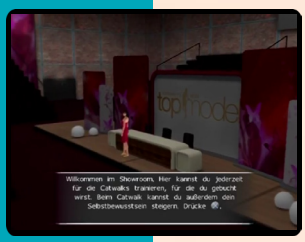


J

Germany’s Next Topmodel

6.7

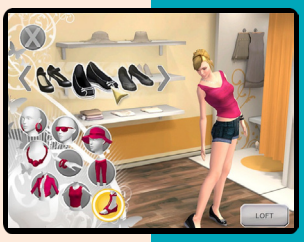


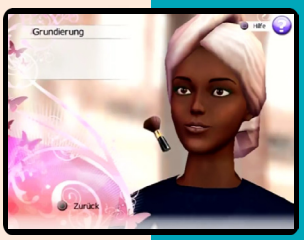


Developer	SevenOne Intermedia
Publisher	SevenOne Intermedia
Release date	(eu) May 21, 2009
Genre	Trivia, Mini-games
Mode	1 Player

Germany’s Next Topmodel: Das offizielle Spiel zur Staffel 2009 is based on the German reality show. The player takes control over one of twelve contestants which all live in a free accessible apartment. Every twenty days they are judged by a jury and the worst one gets eliminated from the show. The judgment is based on three character stats: styling, self confidence and popularity.

Popularity gets improved by talking with the other contestants. Here the player has to choose between three sentences, two mean and a nice one. The styling is divided into clothes, make up and hairstyle. In each one the player receives a reference and needs to shape his model after it. Then this gets judged by the game and it tells one false aspect. Every try costs one day. The last stat, self confidence, gets raised by answering trivia questions about fashion styles and photo shoots.





P

7.4

GetBackers Dakkanya: Dakkandayo! Zenin Shuugou!!

J

Developer	KCEJ
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) January 16, 2003
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

The game feature Midou Ban and Amano Ginji in a cel-shaded side-scrolling action game where the boys use their fighting skills and special attacks to take on various retrieval missions and fighting enemies. When backed into a corner, Midou Ban uses his snake bite move to powerful effect while Ginji throws streams of electrical force to beat back the odds.

In addition to the dynamic duo, four other characters from the anime may be chosen as the on-screen protagonist. Similar to old school games where armies of foes run into players punches and kicks, Get Backers takes the heroes through their paces and ends each level with a boss who does special attacks and generally lasts longer than his underlings.

"psxdatacenter.com"

GetBackers Dakkanya: Ubawareta Mugenjou

7.1

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) September 26, 2002
Genre	Action role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Players control two characters, Ben and Ginji, who possess special powers that allow them to find and to recover items, valuables, and even people who got lost. Now they are offered a huge sum of money for a recovery job they have to do for a customer from the Castle of Infinity.

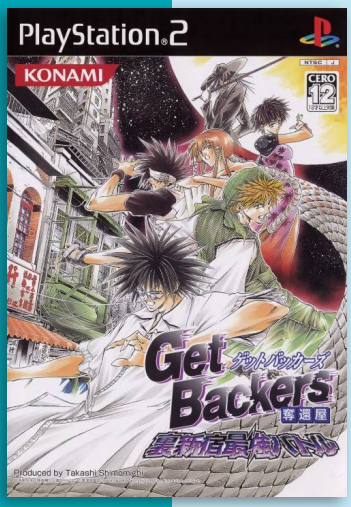
The gameplay is based on exploration of randomly generated dungeons. Players search for items and also trigger important cut scenes by exploring every corner in the dungeons. The action-based combat resembles a fighting game. Players can perform a variety of moves, block the opponent's attack, and switch between the characters. Attacks deplete the stamina bar, so continuously using the strongest attacks is not always the best choice. When the stamina bar is full, they can perform powerful combo attacks.

J

«mobygames.com»

GetBackers Dakkanya: Urashinshiku Saikyou Battle

8.0



Developer	KCEJ
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) April 29, 2004
Genre	Action, Fighting
Mode	1 Player

The game is an action/fighting game. Players must sneak into a research facility on the Forgotten Island to face the intrigues hidden in it. In addition to the main character of the game, the player character can also choose a sidekick, and exchange character for a certain period of time. When players meets certain conditions, they can also work with the sidekick.

J

Gift: Prism

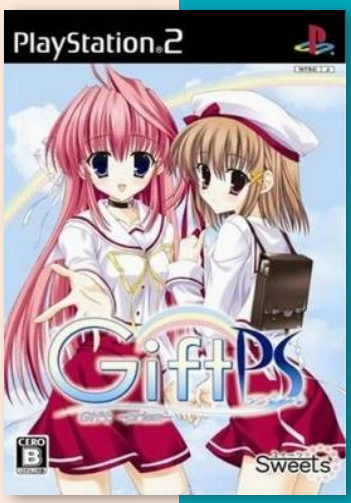
8.0

J

Developer	Moonstone
Publisher	Sweets
Release date	(jp) October 19, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The story revolves around Haruhiko Amami, a high school student living in a town where a rainbow is always seen in the sky.

There are five main plot lines that the player can experience, one for each of the heroines in the story. In order to view the five plot lines to their entirety, the player will have to replay the game multiple times and choose different choices during the decision points.

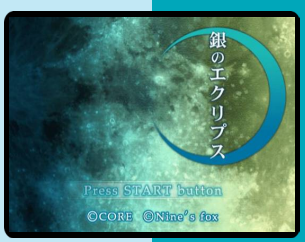


Gin no Eclipse

Developer	Nine's Fox
Publisher	Nine's Fox
Release date	(jp) July 31, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The game is a port of the PC game Fanatica by Orbit. The port add the new character Li Fei.

The protagonist of the game is Arshile, who has no memory of his past. He and his acquaintance Cartis travel and meet a man named Rodney, after talking with him, Arshile wakes up in a palace on an island, apparently being kidnapped by the mysterious man. He have to solve the mystery and the painful truth of his past.



J

Georama Sensen Ijou Nashi

8.0

Developer	Marionette
Publisher	Marionette
Release date	(jp) June 23, 2005
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Jiorama Sensen Ijou Nashi: Stalingrad e no Michi is a strategy/sim game with roleplaying overtones, often also referred to as Diorama or Georama. In this simulation RPG, players send tanks out to the battle field to successfully accomplish timed missions. The game's theme is based on World War II's European front. Once the players select a mission, the game begins on an overhead map as they select destinations for their tanks. The tanks then move automatically, picking up items along the way. Players enter battle once their units come in contact with enemy forces.

Ghost Rider

5.4

Developer	Climax Group
Publisher	2K Games
Release date	(us) February 13, 2007
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

Ghost Rider is a third-person, hack and slash based on the movie of the same name. A Xbox version was originally planned for release, but cancelled.

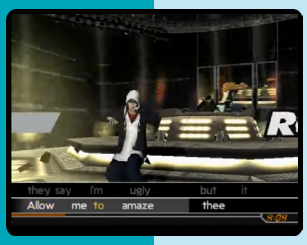
The game's storyline is drawn from the movie, and was penned by Marvel writers Garth Ennis and Jimmy Palmiotti. Players can play as Ghost Rider both on foot, or on the Hellcycle. The villains are from both the movie and the comic, including Scarecrow, Deathwatch, Lilith.

The game features a system reminiscent to that of God of War and Devil May Cry, even having some of the same controls and style of attacks. Combos are done with bare hands and with the Demonic chain. The overall mood, setting and visual style are very much the same as those in the first installment of Devil May Cry. When on the Hellcycle, Ghost Rider is still capable of performing some of the same chain attacks, and can shoot hellfire.

If the player chooses to start the game again as Blade, they get slightly changed gameplay. Blade only has his Daywalker Sword for a weapon and combo attacks are much more limited.

4.9

Get On Da Mic



Developer	Artificial Mind and Movement
Publisher	Eidos Interactive
Release date	(us) October 5, 2004
Genre	Music
Mode	1-4 Players

Unlike the many other singing games available for the PlayStation 2, this game focuses exclusively on Hip-Hop songs. The game is based on karaoke singing in which an amateur singer sings a popular song while it plays with the vocals. The games are able to detect the pitch of the singer's voice and award points based on how well the singer matches the pitches they are supposed to be singing.

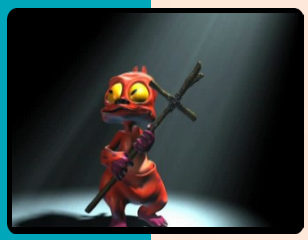
Get On Da Mic requires the use of the same kinds of microphones also used with the Karaoke Revolution games. A hand-held karaoke microphone made by Logitech was available in a bundle with the game and was also sold separately; Logitech also sold a microphone headset.

The game received "generally unfavorable reviews" according to Metacritic.

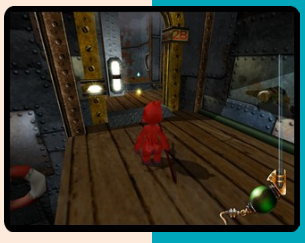
N P

Gift

5.8



Developer	Eko System, Cryo Interactive
Publisher	Cryo Interactive
Release date	(eu) July 6, 2001
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1 Player



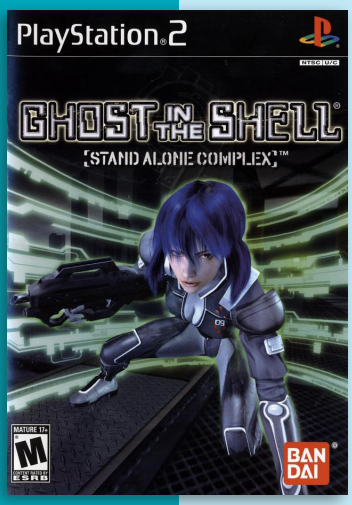
In this game a group of game developers are deep into the final stages of testing their new game. All of a sudden, their characters revolt and break out of their control, taking on lives and ambitions of their own. A princess character is kidnapped and the only way to save her is to send in heroes from other games. Gift, a comical, clumsy, little red alien volunteers and is sent in to save the day.

The player controls Gift in 3D arcade fashion and navigate 10 levels and special rooms, picking up numerous items along the way and meeting characters from other games and films. There are the dwarfs from Snow White, a Darth Vader's light sabre, Indiana Jones' whip, and a machine gun from Quake, among others, throughout the levels. He'll leap between moving platforms, avoid death rays, zap enemies, etc. His progress is often impeded by roadblock type puzzles.

P

Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex

6.6



Developer	Cavia Inc.
Publisher	Atari, (jp) SCEI, (us) Bandai
Release date	(jp) March 4, 2004
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex is third-person shooter based on the cyberpunk anime of the same name.

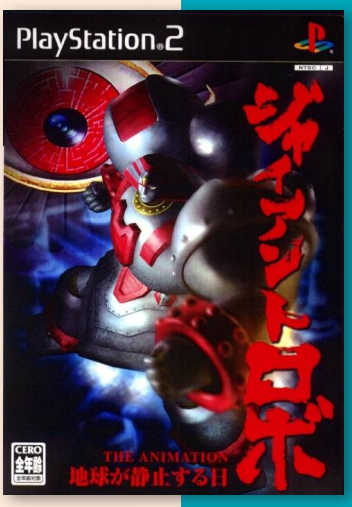
The games take place in the year 2030, between the stories told in Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex and Ghost in the Shell: S.A.C. 2nd GIG. In the year 2030, cybercrime, espionage and terrorism plague a society lost between humanity and technology. As one of the trusted members of the government organization known as Section 9, Major Motoko Kusanagi must uncover the truth behind a mysterious case known only as T.A.R.

The game's playable characters include Motoko Kusanagi and Batou. Levels are separated along the two parallel parts of the Section 9 investigation that forms the basis of the storyline, with some sections following Batou's experiences and others recounting Kusanagi's solo journey to the region where the plot appears to originate from. Gameplay uses a third-person perspective, and players use a variety of weapons, including the ability to ghost-hack opponents, in order to progress. Kusanagi's levels tend to require the player to use her agility to progress to a much greater degree than Batou's levels, which tend to feature a focus on more heavy firepower.

J N P

Giant Robo: The Animation - Chikyuu ga Seishisuru Hi

8.0



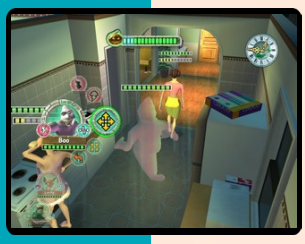
Developer	Tamsoft
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) November 3, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

The game, based on the Giant Robo OAV, is set in The Day the Earth Stood Still continuity. The player leads Daisaku Kusama and Giant Robo on a quest to defeat the BF Group. As Daisaku, the player can pick up items and power-ups on the battlefield; as Giant Robo, the player does battle with other mechas. A Versus Mode allows players to compete against each other.

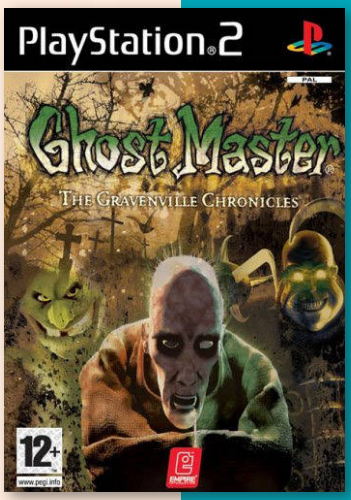
J

Ghost Master

6.0



Developer	Empire Interactive
Publisher	Empire Interactive
Release date	(eu) August 27, 2004
Genre	Real-time strategy
Mode	1 Player



Ghost Master, also known as Ghost Master: The Gravenville Chronicles, is a puzzle strategy game. The player assumes the role of a Ghost Master, a bureaucratic spirit tasked to perform certain duties. While the bulk of a Ghost Master's duties consist of hauntings, a Ghost Master may also be "called in" to increase belief in the supernatural, avenge deaths, and conscript renegade ghosts. Because a Ghost Master cannot directly interfere in the world of mortals, the Ghost Master is given a team of subordinate ghosts to do so. When not haunting, the Ghost Master is responsible for the training of the ghosts under their command.

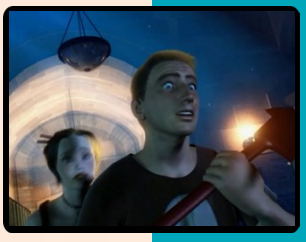
The game consists of 14 levels. In all but a few levels, the primary goal of the game is to scare away all the mortals (humans) and cause them to flee the area in fear or succumb to madness.

Ghost Master plays similarly to a real-time strategy game. The player first chooses the ghosts he wants to field in the level. The player cannot field every ghost in every place. Each ghost has one or two types of objects (or "fetters") it can be bound to. For example, a ghost who died during a robbery could only be bound to a "Murder Fetter," whereas a water spirit can only be bound to a bath, sink, or a simple puddle of water.

Another limiting factor is "Plasm". This numerical resource dictates which abilities a ghost can use. As a human becomes frightened, Plasm is generated. With more Plasm, stronger abilities (and more ghosts) can be fielded at any one time.

Once the objective(s) for a level has been completed, the game rates the player's progress. Many factors are considered, including time, amount of impact on the mortals, and how many mortals fled. If the player is able to complete the mission fairly quickly, there is a multiplier added to the final score. This score determines the amount of "Gold Plasm" given to the player, which is used to add more spells to ghost's arsenal.

The game was later released on Steam. Because of the lack of a sequel, a bonus level was released for fans, which provided some closure after the original cliffhanger ending.



Ghostbusters: The Video Game

6.4

Developer	War Drum Studios
Publisher	Atari, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(us) June 16, 2009
Genre	Action-adventure, Third-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

Ghostbusters: The Video Game is a 2009 action-adventure game based on the Ghostbusters media franchise. Terminal Reality developed the Windows, PS3, and Xbox 360 versions, while Red Fly Studio developed the PS2, PSP, and Wii versions. The game was released after several delays in development and multiple publisher changes.

The game follows the player's character as a new recruit in the Ghostbusters, a team of parapsychologists who pursue and capture ghosts. The game's plot is set two years after Ghostbusters II, around Thanksgiving in 1991, with the Ghostbusters team training the player's character while investigating paranormal activities in New York City.

The game is a third-person shooter, placing players in the role of an original character simply known as "the Rookie", a new recruit to the Ghostbusters team. Players control Rookie's movements as he explores the environments of each level, seeking out paranormal activities and ghosts, either alone or with up to all four of the other Ghostbusters. Players can switch to a first-person perspective by equipping the Rookie with the PKE Meter and goggles. In this mode, paranormal items are highlighted and the PKE Meter will help direct players to ghosts or haunted artifacts. Players can scan these elements to gain more information about them and receive a monetary reward. Weapons cannot be used in this mode.

Outside of the first-person view, players can aim and fire the Proton Stream to weaken ghosts so they can be captured in a ghost trap. However, continuous use of the pack will cause it to overheat. The pack can be manually vented to cool it down and keep it from shorting out and reseting. While the pack is overheated or being vented, players will momentarily be unable to use the pack's weapons. Once a ghost is weak enough, players can switch to the Capture Stream to maneuver the ghost into a ghost trap. With a ghost in the Capture Stream, players can also execute a "slam" attack to force it against a hard surface, weakening it further and making it easier to trap the ghost. The Capture stream can also be used to move objects in the environment.

The single player campaign for the Xbox 360, Windows and PlayStation 3 versions are the same. The Wii/PS2 version has a significantly different campaign although the stories are mostly the same. Over the course of the game, the Proton Pack is upgraded to include an additional firing mode other than the Proton Stream, such as the Shock Blast, Slime Blower (positively charged) and a Meson Collider, each with an alternate firing mode (a Boson Dart, Stasis Stream, Slime Tether and Overload Pulse). By capturing ghosts, as well as identifying cursed artifacts and new species of ghosts using the PKE Meter, players earn in-game money to spend on upgrades to proton pack modes and ghost traps.

Health regenerates over time if the player does not take further damage. However, by taking more damage, they can be knocked down; if there are other

Ghostbusters still standing, they will attempt to reach the player and revive him/her. Similarly, the player can help revive fallen team members. However, should all the active Ghostbusters fall, including the player, play will end and the player will have to restart at the last checkpoint.

The Wii, PS2, and PSP versions (aka "Stylized Version") differ slightly from the Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and Windows versions (aka "Realistic Versions") in some aspects. Like the cartoon-like graphics and the E10+ rating. Visual aspects of the interface are relocated, such as placing the Proton Pack's temperature meter as a HUD element instead of on the backpack. In the Stylized Version, the player "slams" a ghost by initiating a Simon Says-type game with the ghost, and is also given the option to play as a man or woman.

In 2006, game developer ZootFly started work on a Ghostbusters game before having secured the rights to develop the game from Sony. The company subsequently released videos of an early version of the game onto the Internet. However, the company was unable to secure the rights to develop the game as a Ghostbusters game. Zootfly then continued development of the game as a non-Ghostbusters themed game renamed TimeO.

Coincidentally, in the Spring of 2007, Sierra Entertainment and developer Terminal Reality met with Sony to discuss the possibility of developing their own Ghostbusters video game. The positive reaction that Zootfly's videos garnered helped sell the concept of such a game to Sony. After a successful pitch, Terminal Reality started developing the game, eventually stating that the PS3 was the lead development platform. One of the game's features that Terminal Reality promoted was a crowd artificial intelligence system to be used extensively for a Thanksgiving Day parade level that was eventually cut from the final version.

Development of the game stopped when Vivendi merged with Activision to form Activision Blizzard. On July 28, 2008 Activision Blizzard (the publisher of Vivendi's and Sierra's titles) announced that only five franchises would be released through Activision. Ghostbusters was not one of them and was put in developmental limbo following the announcement. The Sierra PR team later confirmed that the game was not and would not be cancelled.

Ending months of speculation, Infogrames announced on November 7, 2008, that Atari would be releasing the game in June 2009, to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the first film's theatrical release. Sony later announced that they would be publishing the PS2 and PS3 versions in Europe granting the Sony consoles a timed exclusive release, while Atari would publish the game for other consoles later in the year. Atari would remain the sole publisher for the games in North America. Despite Namco's purchase of Atari's European operations, this release schedule remained intact.

Terminal Reality reported total development costs between $15 and 20 million. Terminal Reality had also expressed interest in making a game based on the possible third Ghostbusters film, though the studio has since shut down.

The project allowed Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis to explore some aspects of the original films that they otherwise had not been able to in the past, such as the history of the Librarian ghost, and pursue some of the ideas left out of the original script, including the appearance of Ivo Shandor as Gozer, who was intended to appear in the finale of the film as the ghost of a man in a business suit. Other concepts used in the game, such as the alternate dimensions that open up during the latter half of the game, are based on the original Ghostbusters 3 concept Hellbent which was in development hell during the 1990s.

The game contains the soundtrack from the original Ghostbusters film along with various characters, locations, and props featured in the films. Ghostbusters creator Dan Aykroyd has said, *"This is essentially the third movie."*

WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

by: PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) 2003 June #15

Forget* Silent Hill *and* Resident Evil, *the latest spectre in horror gaming has arrived.* OPS2 *unveils* SCEE's Ghostunter - *guaranteed to make you pee your strides.

MEET LAZARUS JONES. He's the ghosthunter. The new anti-hero of Studio Cambridge's *Ghosthunter*, a revolutionary new action title from the same development house that brought you *Primal*. Like Jen in *Primal*, Lazarus isn't your traditional monosyllabic, macho lead character.

As a Detroit police officer on a routine call to a derelict High School he's unwittingly dragged into a terrifying supernatural world and given the power to see ghosts. Initially, Lazarus - understandably - is somewhat perturbed. No. Make that *f*cking scared*.

Lazarus and his partner, Anna Steele, should perhaps have read the first chapter of *Horror Movie Plots For Beginners* before striding, balls out, into the creaky High School. As most derelict buildings are, it was the site of a series of horrific murders *and* the location of a secret ghost research laboratory. While exploring the buildings, Lazarus and Anna stumble on the lab, and then it all kicks off. Anna gets abducted, Lazarus gets possessed and we've got a game on our hands.

To get an idea of the atmosphere of *Ghosthunter*, consider this description from Creator James Shepherd: "The gameplay is focused on making the player really scared. All the time." The last time someone said that, they were describing a *Silent Hill* game. But instead of meat puppets and walking spleens, *Ghosthunter* plays on your primal fears. It twists and subverts normality and draws on horror film staples with the aim of completely unsettling the player. Your task? Accompany Lazarus as he comes to term with his new role as a modern-day Ghosthunter and busts some spiritual ass.

Fear and Effect

It's the game they're calling 'Survival Horror evolved'. But what does that catually mean? James Sheperd, Creative Director of* Ghosthunter *explains.

IT LOOKS THE BOMB!

"We've taken our studio's state-of-the-art graphics engine (last seen in Primal) and added in a new layer of special effects technology to create the most advanced interactive graphics yet seen on PS2."

IT'S AN ORIGINAL GAME CONCEPT!

"It's not a stealth game or an all-out blaster. As the name implies, it's a 'hunting' game. Lazarus has to chase and trap ghosts and monsters, some of whom don't take too kindly to being chased."

IT HAS MOVIE PRODUCTION VALUES!

"One of the team's aims is to make a game with the production values of a movie, without losing the interactive immersion of the greatest games. I think we're well on the way to achieving this."

IT'S GOT FREAKISH MONSTERS!

"You'll have to see the monsters in the game to believe them - these screenshots just show the baby ones."

IT'LL APPEAL TO HORROR FILM FANS!

"Playing Ghosthunter will be like starring in all the best horror movies you've ever seen rolled into one."

IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?

AFRAID SO.

Don't believe in the afterlife? Neither did Officer Lazarus Jones, right up until it tapped him on the shoulder. This hard-headed Detroit cop has been drawn into the haunting horror grounds of the undead - and now, he's not just fighting disbelief, he's fighting monsters, mutants and ghouls. Prepare yourself and take a leap over to the other side.

www.ghosthunter-game.com au.playstation.com

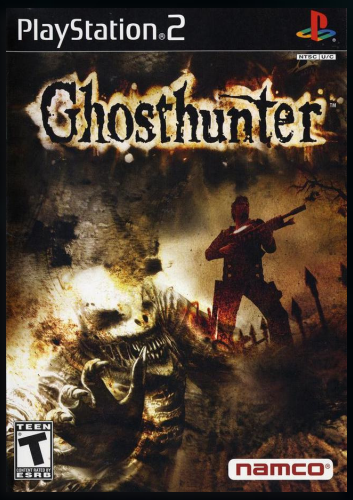
PlayStation 2

IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM, YOU'RE JOINING THEM.

"PS2" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. and "SONY" are registered trademarks of Sony Corporation. GhostHunter™ © 2003. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by Cambridge Studios. GhostHunter is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. ICP55627

Ghosthunter

6.9



JNP

Developer	SCE Studio Cambridge
Publisher	SCEE, (us) Namco, (jp) Electronic Arts
Release date	(eu) December 5, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Ghosthunter is based primarily around ghost hunting, and tells the story of Lazarus Jones, a rookie detective with the Detroit Police Department, who accidentally releases a group of imprisoned ghosts from their confinement. When one of the ghosts kidnaps his partner, Jones must enter the ghost realm to track her down.

Ghosthunter is a third-person shooter in which players control the protagonist, Lazarus Jones, with the left analog stick. The right analog stick is used to move the camera, or adjust aim when in combat or first-person mode. When in default third-person mode, Jones has a full range of movement, but he cannot shoot. To do so, the player must enter combat mode, which places a crosshair on screen. When in combat mode, Jones' lateral motion changes to strafing, and he moves slower. Jones can also shoot whilst in first-person mode, although he is unable to move. The game features two types of ammo; normal ammo for the handgun and shotgun, and "ghost energy" for the other weapons. Ghost energy can be collected in the form of orbs found throughout the game and dropped by defeated enemies.

When the player encounters a ghost, they must first shoot it to weaken it to a point where it can be captured. Capturing a ghost is accomplishing by hitting it with a "Capture Grenade." If the player uses the grenade before weakening the ghost sufficiently for capture, the grenade attaches itself to the enemy for a limited time, and a health meter appears. If Jones depletes the health meter whilst the grenade is still attached, the monster will be captured. The grenade can also be used to pick up ghost energy and health orbs which the player cannot physically reach.

As well as controlling Jones, the player can also control Astral, a spirit which Jones can call in specific locations. Astral levitates rather than walks, and has no offensive capabilities. Instead, the player has access to different "forms", such as a Revenant form which allows her to walk and interact with switches, a charming form which allows her to trick ghosts into following her, a spectral form which allows her to warp through walls and floors at special warp points, a poltergeist form which allows her to throw objects, and a possession form which allows her control certain ghosts.

Ghosthunter is one of the relatively rare examples of a game featuring a false ending; Jones is killed, apparently for good, and the game returns to the title screen, inviting the player to start over. However, within moments, the game begins again, with the player in control of another character.

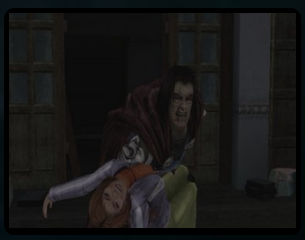
The origin of the game was SCE Cambridge Studio's desire to do *"a very high concept dark adult, James Bond/Ghostbusters"* type game. Each of the team looked to their favorite horror films for inspiration, as well as to other survival horror games. They were also particularly inspired by Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty.

The game was first announced on April 22, 2003, with SCEE revealing a plot outline, the

main characters, and the basic game mechanics. It was also revealed that the game would run off a tweaked version of the Primal game engine, with new special effects technology used to produce the game's *"cinema-grade effects."*

Chris Deering; SCEE president, said *"With Ghosthunter, SCEE Studio Cambridge has created a dark, atmospheric fantasy that will appeal to both gamers and horror fans. The game utilizes the PlayStation 2's technical capabilities to combine film-quality graphics and sound with well-developed characters and a compelling storyline, delivering a rich, cinematic experience that fully captures the essence of the action-horror genre."*

The game was released in Europe in December, but did not sell very well, and wasn't picked up for North American release, with Sony choosing not to publish it themselves. In April 2004, however, Namco announced they had acquired North American distribution rights, with release slated for August. The North American localization was first previewed at the 2004 E3 event in May. For the North American version of the game, over 1,500 fixes and improvements were made, with the grenade targeting system and the camera and combat systems refined. Some of the puzzles were made easier, but combat was made harder. In Japan, the game was released on September 2, 2004, published by Electronic Arts Victor.



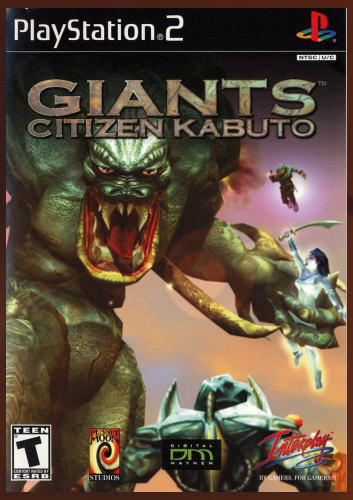
Ghosthunter received "mixed or average reviews," according to Metacritic.

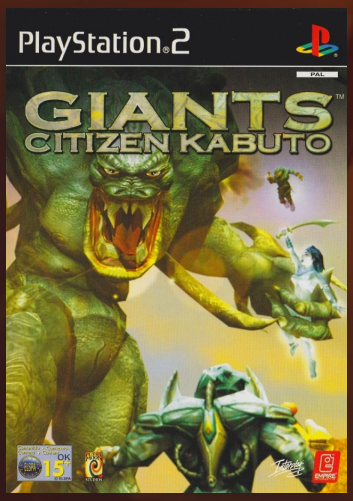
Eurogamer's Ronan Jennings argued its only real positive attribute were its graphics, of which he wrote, *"there are times in it where I have never seen anything so impressive in a game. As you'd expect, things like texture detail and animation are superb, but it's not these aspects that steal the show. Rather it's the combination of breathtaking lighting and wonderful art that do the trick [...] In Ghosthunter, there are certain scenes that made me stop playing and mutter 'my god' to myself."* However, he was critical of the level design, the Astral-related puzzles and the *"clunky"* combat system. He concluded, *"Ghosthunter once again raises the 'aesthetics versus gameplay' debate. It sports a stunning-looking world that's comfortable and satisfying to explore but for some reason the developer has tarnished this with a god-awful set of enemies and infuriating level design."*

Game Revolution's Brian Gee praised the graphics, but found the overall experience lacking: *"While Ghosthunter sets up a freaky scene, it never does much to distinguish itself from your average action game. There are no big scares and only mildly interesting action."*

GameSpot's Alex Navarro was more impressed, arguing that it struck a good balance between survival horror and action; *"The primary reason Ghosthunter works is that it seems to have a very firm grip on what it wants to be. It knows it isn't scary enough to really fit into the survival horror genre, but it's too creepy to be considered just a standard action game. Ghosthunter falls squarely in between the two, and it manages to keep an almost uncanny balance all throughout the game."* He too was impressed by the graphics, but was critical of the game's length. He concluded *"Ghosthunter is a very enjoyable experience for as long as it lasts. Most players should be able to forgive its relative simplicity thanks to its excellent ambiance and entertaining characters and storyline."*

7.9





Giants: Citizen Kabuto

Developer	Digital Mayhem
Publisher	Interplay
Release date	(us) December 20, 2001
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

Giants: Citizen Kabuto was the first project for Planet Moon Studios, which consisted of former Shiny Entertainment employees who had worked on the game MDK. Giants went through four years of development before Interplay Entertainment originally published it on December 6, 2000, for Windows.

The game world of Giants is set on a "Island" traveling through space. Its surface comprises grasslands, deserts, and forests, surrounded by azure seas. Players have an unobstructed view of the game world to its horizon; whereas distant objects are slightly blurred to convey a sense of distance. Missions for Meccaryns provide cover to hide behind, large spaces of water for Reapers, and creatures for Kabuto to eat.

Players take on the roles of three humanoid races: gun-toting Meccaryns, magic-wielding Sea Reapers, and the gigantic Kabuto. The player is assigned direct control of a single character. The game's developers, Planet Moon Studios, created this design to encourage players to focus on the action and not to be burdened with micromanagement. Players can customize the controls, which are largely the same for each race, with slight differences for abilities.

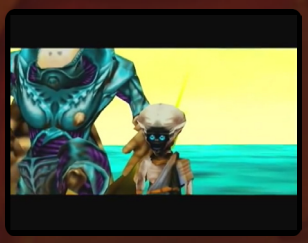
The game consists of a sequence of missions set as an overarching story. Each mission requires the completion of certain objectives to progress to the next mission. The objectives are usually the elimination of enemies or a certain structure, but several of them test the player's eye–hand coordination or require the player to rescue and protect certain units. Players control their characters from a default third person perspective; a first person view is optional. Each race has its own offensive style, and a special mode of fast movement. Killing a creature releases a power-up, which heals or awards weapons to its collector.

The real-time strategy elements of Giants consist of base building and resource gathering, wherein the resources are small humanoids called 'Smarties'. There are a limited number of Smarties in a mission, and players must rush to gather them, or kidnap them from the opponent to gain an advantage. Players also gather sustenance for the Smarties to make them work; Meccaryn and Reaper players hunt the cattle-like Vimps for meat and souls respectively. The options in building a base are limited; players can neither choose the locations for the structures nor manage their workforce in detail. Players in control of Kabuto need not build a base, whereas the character gains strength and produces subordinate characters by hunting for food. Kabuto consumes Smarties to increase its size and power; at maximum size, he can produce smaller Tyrannosaurus-like units as subordinates. To restore his health, Kabuto eats Vimps and other units (player- and computer-controlled).

When five members of Shiny Entertainment's MDK development team broke off to set up Planet Moon Studios in 1997 with software engineer, Scott Guest, they decided to make their first project

fun and original, a game with graphics and gameplay unseen at that time. Nick Bruty, Bob Stevenson, and Tim Williams initially conceived the idea of pitting players as spacemen, pirates, and giants against each other and having fun. Initially projected for release in late 1999, the game suffered delays to its development largely due to the illness of their chief programmer, Andy Astor; he was suffering from stage IV mantle cell lymphoma in late 1999. The team realized they needed more resources and by 2000, they had hired two more programmers and an artist. Producing a next-generation game required them to keep up with 1998–2000's rapid advancement of technology, which resulted in further delays. The team upsized the graphic textures as they changed the graphical software to support NVIDIA graphics cards. Within a year after development started in 1999, the initial minimum graphics specification climbed from requiring Voodoo 1 graphics cards to those of the GeForce-series. Planet Moon deemed game engines available during development too restrictive and inappropriate for their requirements, and built their own. Called Amityville, it could support Glide, OpenGL, and Direct3D. The team used it to create the required *"lush and vibrant"* outdoor environments, and terrain deformation effects.

Planet Moon designed the structure of the single-player mode to be a gradual learning process for the players; the game would introduce new command sets to the players as they progress, and encourage them to repeat using the new commands for that mission. From the start of the project, the team intended the controls to be simple, and mapped commonly used commands to a few keys. Focus groups consisting more than 25 testers went through this design to verify its ease. Planet Moon



aimed for a complex AI; computer-controlled characters would evade shots and take cover. The enemy AI would plot its actions according to long-term goals. The development team consulted Mark Frohnmayer, lead programmer of the multiplayer game Tribes 2, for advice on implementing the multiplayer portion. To balance the characters in combat, Planet Moon focused on characteristics that could affect the fighting capabilities, instead of tweaking the damage output. The team faced a tight schedule, and abandoned several features initially in the game. Early designs allowed players to change the landscape; they could gorge out water channels and isolate segments of the land by playing as Reapers. The Kabuto character initially could bake mud into "mud shepherd" units and use them to defend its herd of food.

Interplay Entertainment released the Windows version of the game on December 7, 2000. Planet Moon later created a special version of the game optimized for the GeForce 3 graphics card to display water reflections, soft-edged shadows, and weather effects. This version was not sold as a standalone commercial product but as a part of certain GeForce 3 graphic card package deals. Giants was ported to the PS2, a process overseen by Interplay's division, Digital Mayhem, who posted updates of their progress on IGN. Their greatest challenge for the PS2 port was converting and storing the special effects of the Windows version onto the lesser storage space of the PS2. LightWave 3D was used by the team to convert the graphic resources. Although they had to reduce the image resolution, Digital Mayhem increased the number of polygons that composed the player character models, making them smoother and more detailed in shape. Due to the limited capabilities of the PS2 as compared to the Windows platform and the ad-

dition of a save feature, the team focused on enhancing the action gameplay, streamlining the interfaces, and tweaking the Reaper ski races, level designs, and game balance. They redesigned the controls for the PS2's controller, and after finding the analog sticks less easy to aim with than a mouse, implemented a feature to help the player's aim. Digital Mayhem originally intended to retain the multiplayer mode, but discarded it, believing the PS2 environment could not generate the same multiplayer atmosphere as the Windows platform. Interplay also announced plans for an Xbox port but nothing resulted from this.

Near the release of the US Windows version of the game, Planet Moon failed to obtain a "Teen" rating from the ESRB despite changing the original red blood to green and covering Delphi's toplessness with a bikini top. They made the changes to broaden retail opportunities because many large retailers in the US refused to sell "Mature"-rated games; Wal-Mart reiterated in October 2002 that they would never stock their shelves with software that contained vulgarity or nudity. Planet Moon Studios later released a patch that reverted the color of the blood to red, and computer gamers found they could restore Delphi's toplessness by deleting a file.

Composers Mark Snow (noted for his The X-Files musical scores), Mark Morgan, and Jeremy Soule (both known for the music of several video games) were involved in the music for Giants. Interplay hired Morgan to compose the scores, although reports showed they initially hired Snow for the task. Morgan, however, could not fully concentrate on the task due to personal reasons and handed it over to Soule. Closing credits of the game listed only Morgan and Soule, and Soule compiled their works onto the original soundtrack of the game. Soule originally offered to autograph the soundtrack on its release in the United States; however, he stopped his offer when email feedback revealed many were intending to pirate his work through the peer-to-peer file sharing software Napster instead of buying it.

Planet Moon Studios' blending of two genres in Giants has earned the acclaim of reviewers. Game Revolution and GameSpot found the simplified real-time strategy task of resource gathering in Giants more interesting than tedious, and Troy Dunniway, Microsoft's Head of Game Design in 2002, commented that the real-time strategy elements enhanced the game's shooter aspect rather than making it a hybrid of two genres. Sci Fi Weekly was impressed that both styles of play never interfered with each other, which was complemented by the unique gameplay of each race. The Entertainment Depot, however, found the base building in several missions tedious; they said the player had to rebuild the base several times due to being forced to leave the base defenseless, which allowed the enemy destroy the structures.

The AI in the game was also the subject of much commentary. Reviewers said they needed to prompt the allied AI characters to perform actions on several occasions, although the allied AI performed pretty well most of the time. FiringSquad disagreed, calling their computer controlled teammates worthless and finding joy in leaving them to their deaths. The game review site thought the same of the enemy AI, a view echoed by IGN; enemies were unaware of the deaths of nearby teammates, and kept running into obstacles. ActionTrip, however, stated the enemy AI did well enough to take cover or flee when hurt, and constantly attack the player's base.

Many reviewers found the best part of Giants to be its bawdy humor; the scenes were *"bizarre and funny without ever letting the silliness distract or annoy the player"*. FiringSquad claimed the humor kept them plowing through the game regardless of the issues they encountered, and were disappointed when the game steadily lost this approach in the later stages. Mac Guild and Macworld UK, however, considered the humor crude on a childlike level and its delivery forced. In spite of the humor, many reviewers found themselves bored by the monotony and slow pace of certain segments. According to ActionTrip, Giants lacked a unique quality to capture attention, compared to its contemporaries such as American McGee's Alice, MechWarrior 4: Vengeance, and Sea Dogs.

Reviewers appreciated the PS2 version for including the asked-for save feature, but complained the ported game retained the AI and level design issues associated with the Windows version. IGN remarked that it looked less impressive than the computer versions. The lower resolution, flat textures, washed out colors, and sparser environments made the game average looking.

Gigawing Generations

7.1

J P

Developer	Takumi Corporation
Publisher	Taito Corporation, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) March 24, 2005
Genre	Shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

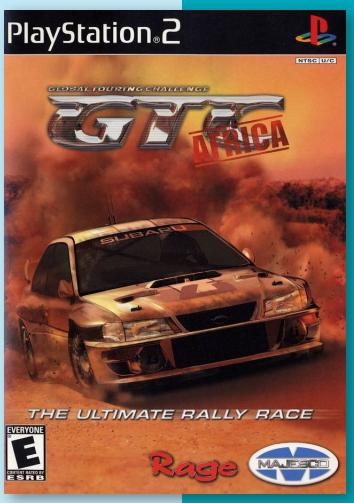
Giga Wing Generations is a vertically scrolling shooter and the third game in the Giga Wing series. Players control one of four available ships over the constantly scrolling landscapes and need to earn a high score by shooting the various enemies that appear and dodging numerous bullets and obstacles. The game is a "bullet hell" style shooter and there are a significant number of bullets to dodge, sometimes hundreds at a time covering the entire screen. Each of the available ships has three types of attacks. The first is the basic attack. Next is the reflect force; this acts as a temporary shield and any bullets that are encountered are gathered and then fired back at the enemy. The final attack is a bomb and is the most powerful attack affecting everything on the screen. The four ships each have different attack abilities and flight characteristics. As is typical in arcade style shooters, weapon upgrades can be acquired to increase your firepower.

"mobygames.com"

Global Touring Challenge: Africa

6.4

J N P



Developer	Rage Software
Publisher	Rage Software, (us) Majesco, (jp) Success
Release date	(eu) November 16, 2001
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

GTC Africa is a rally game for 1-2 players in a geographical setting of Africa. The game could be seen as a follow-up to the developers previous game Wild Wild Racing though now it contain one continent only, and use more ordinary rally cars.

The game has 9 cars used in 19 circuits in environments from cities to savannah and jungle, which can be raced individually or in one of three championships, either East Coast Championship, the North South Challenge or a full African Tour with all 19 circuits.

For 2 players, only the individual races are available. There is also a Practice and a Challenge mode.

"mobygames.com"

8.0

Gintama

J

Developer	Namco Bandai Games
Publisher	Namco Bandai Games
Release date	(jp) August 30, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Gintama Gin-San to Issho! Boku no Kabuki Machi Nikki is a visual novel based on a manga. The game feature an original storyline divided into 90 short stories and feature full voice for the characters and different game endings. In some of the episodes the game have some actions sequences in which the player has to press the Circle Button repeatedly, including other mini game sequences.

"psxdatacenter.com"

Giren no Yabou: Zeon Dokuritsu Sensouden - Kouryaku Shireisho

Developer	Bandai
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) February 20, 2003
Genre	Simulation
Mode	1 Player

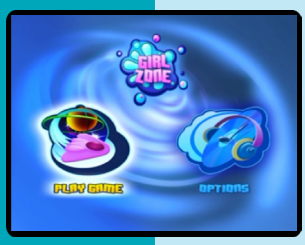
Kidou Senshi Gundam Giren no Yabou - Zeon Dokuritsu Sensouden - Kouryaku Shireisho is an update to Kidou Senshi Gundam: Giren no Yabou, originally a 1998 Sega Saturn title. The game ties into the Gundam media franchise.

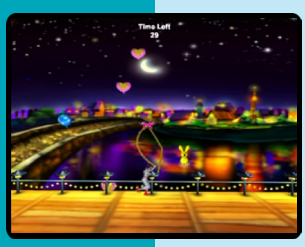
The game includes different scenarios where all mobile suits can be developed, ranks of subordinates, scenarios where ranks can be changed, etc.

J

3.8

Girl Zone





P

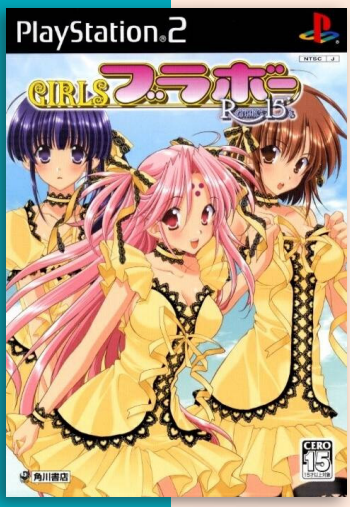
Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2005
Genre	Simulation
Mode	1 Player

In the distant future, two girls become bored and decide to travel between planets in search of adventure.

Gameplay consists of ten basic mini games themed around things which may interest young girls, such as playing dress up, collecting animals, setting up on the beach for a day of relaxation and a sidescroller avoding animals while collecting points.

Girls Bravo

7.0



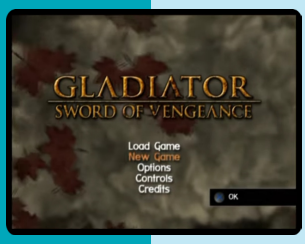
Developer	Kadokawa Shoten
Publisher	Kadokawa
Release date	(jp) January 27, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

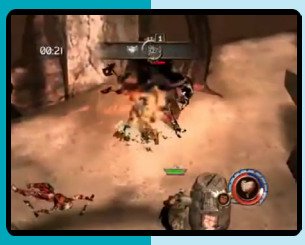
The player controls Yukinari Sasaki. He has a Female Allergy Improvement System used to measure how long he's been near girls and how severe his allergic reactions have become. If he spends too much time around girls, he will faint. If he manages to spend enough time with girls without getting allergic, his resistance level gets higher. He can choose to be with several girls. Whoever he spends the most time with becomes his lover.

J

Gladiator: Sword of Vengeance

6.5





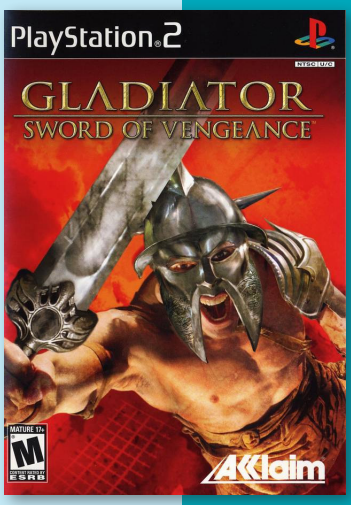
N P

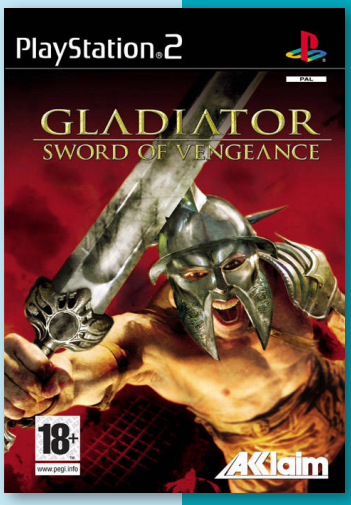
Developer	Acclaim Studios Manchester
Publisher	Acclaim
Release date	(us) November 5, 2003
Genre	Action, Fighting
Mode	1 Player

Gladiator: Sword of Vengeance is a hack and slash game that takes place in the times of the Roman empire. Players take control of Invictus Thrax, a Roman slave, who is killed by an unknown and possibly un-human creature. In the afterlife, Invictus meets the sons of Jupiter. They inform him of how Arruntius' power came from help of the gods of terror. They charge him with the task of eliminating the emperor, Arruntius, and restoring Rome to glory.

The game is essentially an 3d action/combat game which features hand to hand combat with weapons, combos and magic. The action also includes maneuvering around, from gliding down ropes to jumping traps. Challenges are scattered around the game world, which when defeated, unlock magical powers granted by the gods, such as Pluto's power, which raises spirits from the dead to help you in battle. A unique feature of the game is the execution maneuver. Upon the near death of certain enemies, players can execute this maneuver which will result in a cinematic random brutal execution by Thrax.

The game's graphics try to recreate the atmosphere of gladiator films such as Ben-Hur. A wide range of characters are featured from opposing gladiators to mythical enemies like cyclopes.





Gitaroo Man

8.2

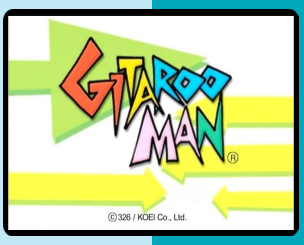
J N P

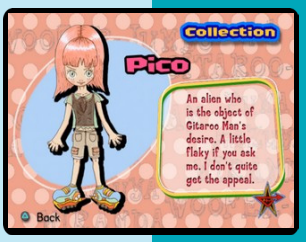
Developer	Koei, Inis
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) June 21, 2001
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Gitaroo Man is a rhythm game in which the player character, U-1, faces against various opponents in musical battles. In each level, both the player and opponent has a life bar, with the player tasked with depleting the opponent's life bar and reaching the end of the song without running out of life. With some exceptions, each level consists of three main phases; Charge, Attack, and Guard, followed by the Harmony and End phases at the end of the level. During the Charge and Attack phases, players follow a "trace line" using the analogue stick, upon which red "phase bars" will appear. By pressing and holding down the button at the start of a phase, timing it to its appearance at the center of the screen, and releasing the button at the end, the player plays music. In the Charge phase, successful notes restore the player's health, whereas in the Attack phase, successful notes damage the opponents whilst missed notes will hurt the player. During the guard phase, players must hit corresponding buttons as they reach the center of the screen to avoid attacks from the opponent, taking damage should they miss. Unlike the player's life, which ends the game if depleted, the opponent's life bar indicates the progress of the player. Most levels are split up into different sections, which can have multiple variations on each playthrough, and the player must damage the opponent enough to move onto the next section. Otherwise, they will have to repeat the section until enough damage is dealt. At the end of a level, players play through the Harmony phase, which is similar to the Attack phase, and keep on playing til the End phase, at which point the player will no longer take damage. After each level, players are given a rank based on their performance, with good ranks earning items for the collection, which unlocks character bios.

The game features visual production by Mitsuru Nakamura and an original soundtrack by Japanese band COIL.

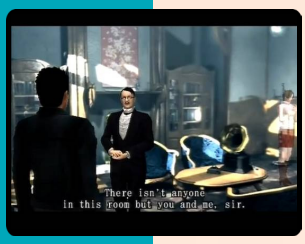
Edge awarded the game a score of 7 out of 10; the game was later included in that magazine's staff- and reader-voted "Top 100 Games" list published in July 2007.





6.9

Glass Rose



J P

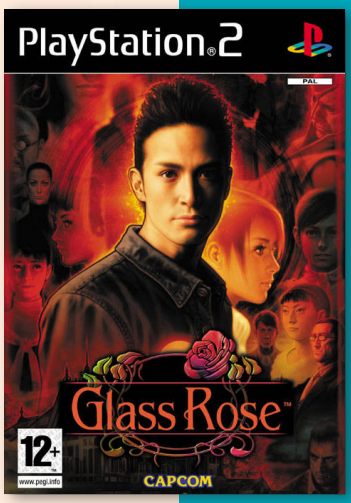
Developer	Cing
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	(jp) November 6, 2003
Genre	Point-and-click horror adventure
Mode	1 Player

Glass Rose is a point-and-click adventure psychological horror. It primarily takes place in a remote Japanese mansion in 1929. The player assumes the role of an amateur reporter named Takashi Kagetani. While exploring an abandoned mansion with his friend Emi in the year 2003, he is knocked unconscious by a supernatural force and awakens seventy years in the past, where the mansion has been restored to its former glory. In order to return to his own time, Takashi is forced to explore the mansion and interact with its denizens, the Yoshinodou family.

Takashi also finds that the time warp has left him with the ability to briefly glimpse into a person's mind while conversing with them. By employing this ability, he can investigate into a series of murders in the Yoshinodou household.

The game mainly uses a point and click system. Players do not control Takashi's movements directly, instead using a cursor to select points of interest in the game's environment. This control scheme is also used in some scenes that are similar to quick time events.

A large portion of the game involves talking to other characters in the Yoshinodou household.

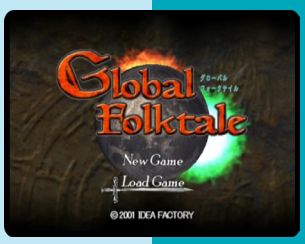


Global Folktale

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) October 25, 2001
Genre	Role-playing, Strategy
Mode	1 Player

In Global Folktale animals have captured the land and humans have retreated to a faraway place. But after years of hiding the people and decide to fight back to reclaim what's theirs. Led by Allen, players gain control of an eight character party to battle their feral foes in a variety of locations.

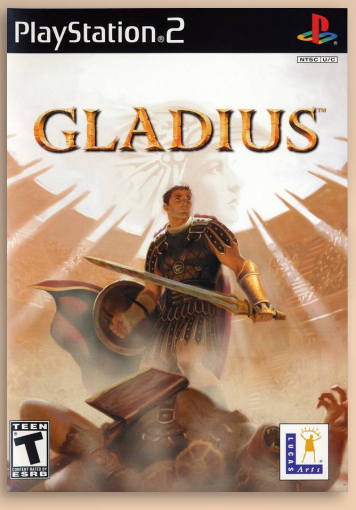
Unlike most strategy/RPGs, the combat takes place in real-time with 3D polygonal graphics, while each character is supported by a multitude of customization options, weapons, and items.

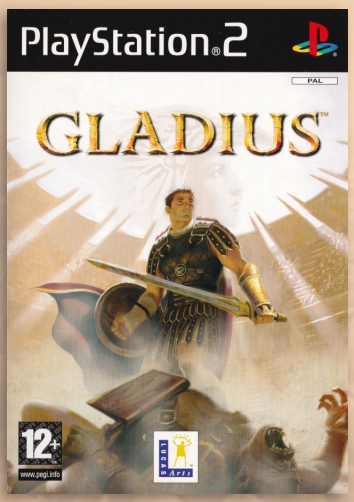


J

7.8

Gladius





Developer	LucasArts
Publisher	LucasArts, (eu) Activision
Release date	(us) October 28, 2003
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1-2 Players

Gladius is a tactical role-playing game released for the GameCube, Xbox, and PS2.

The game allows the player to build a school of gladiators and take them into battle against opposing schools in a quest for fame and glory. The plot focuses on several of the main characters and slowly affects the decisions of the group, eventually leading to a final large battle that tests the skills of all members of the school. Upon starting the game, the player can choose between a school in Imperia, home to a strong military mentality and soldiers who consider their northern neighbors uncivilized and bullish, or a school in Nordagh, where witches and woodland beasts dwell, and who in turn detest the Imperials for their desire for greater conquest.

The gladiators have the opportunity to travel through four distinctly different regions on their road to the ultimate championship. Depending on the player's school choice, they begin in either the Northern lands of Nordagh (Barbarian school), which has a culture similar to that of 'Nordic' lands, or Imperia (Gladiator school), an Imperial Roman land. Upon completion of these two stages of play one proceeds onto the Windward Steppes, a grasslands region dominated by archers and beasts, reminiscent of the steppes of Asia, followed by the Southern Expanse, a desert region filled with spellcasters, nomadic warriors, and insects. The latter is an area reminiscent of Ancient Egypt; the main insects of this region are beetles, which held a high importance in Egyptian mythology, and scorpions, a staple arachnid in any desert region. The conclusion of the game takes place in and around the large central arena of Caltha in the Imperial Region.

As in many role-playing games, players outfit their characters with gear to increase their abilities, and as they win fights, they gain experience which allows them to don new equipment and undertake new quests. Additionally, winning certain hidden or difficult contests allows the players to recruit unique character classes such as yetis, minotaurs, and the undead.

Fighting in Gladius uses a turn-based mechanism, but with a twist. There are "swing meters" - like those found in many golf games - that determine the accuracy and effectiveness of strikes. The meters can be disabled in the options menu.

Gladius employs a rigid rock-paper-scissors approach to character classes and combat. There are three main classes of characters: heavy, medium, and light. In the same pattern as rock-paper-scissors, heavy beats medium, medium beats light, and light beats heavy. Barring a large level gap or terrain advantage, this pattern usually holds true in most one-on-one battles. There are also the support and arcane classes, which are neutral in the class relationship. Finally, there are several affinity classes, such as the Fire, Water, Earth, Air, Dark, and Light.

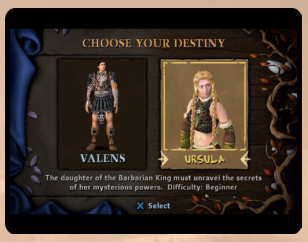
To determine the effectiveness of an attack, the game employs two types of swing meters. Most swing meters consist of three segments: blue, yellow, and red. Blue

denotes a “miss”, resulting in an attack that either misses completely or causes very little damage. Yellow results in a standard damage attack that may still be avoided, depending on the chance to hit given. Red results in a critical hit, which cannot be avoided or blocked and does much more damage. The secondary form of the swing meter is a yellow bar with a small green insert, used for mainly for status-affecting skills. Here, the goal is simply to aim for the green, which will make the skill function properly.

Depending on the swing meter, the player will either be required to press a specific key once to stop the meter on a color, press two buttons in rapid succession to move the meter to a color, or press a specific series of buttons before the meter runs out. Combo meters act in the same manner as the former, but are lined up next to one another, thus requiring the player to repeat the process up to five times.

As the player purchases higher-level skills, using the meters becomes progressively more difficult. While scoring a critical hit using a standard attack is fairly simple, the strongest skills have swing meters which can be quite difficult to use, thus making the points spent to gain them a gamble. Another point to consider is the state of alertness of the player. Given the reflexes necessary to consistently and accurately use the swing meters, and the consequences of missed hits, a tired player will inevitably fare poorer than an alert one.

The game has an option which will run the swing meters for the player with the most common outcome a normal strike. This can make combat much easier or more difficult depending on the skill of the player and the abilities of their school. A player skilled with swing meters can often defeat higher-leveled oppo-



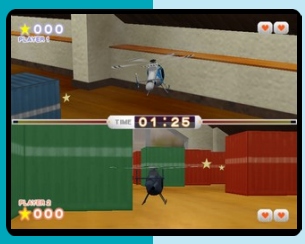
The game has an option which will run the swing meters for the player with the most common outcome a normal strike. This can make combat much easier or more difficult depending on the skill of the player and the abilities of their school.

Two game modes are offered here: co-op which allows two players to play in the story mode and complete the game side by side. The first player controls the movement throughout the world map and also the menu screens. Once player one engages in battle, the other player can enter and control the gladiators of their choice from the school. The other mode offered is the Versus mode. Here, players can compete in an exhibition battle.

The game was rated as one of the “best Xbox games most people never played” by Official Xbox Magazine.

Go Go Copter

5.0

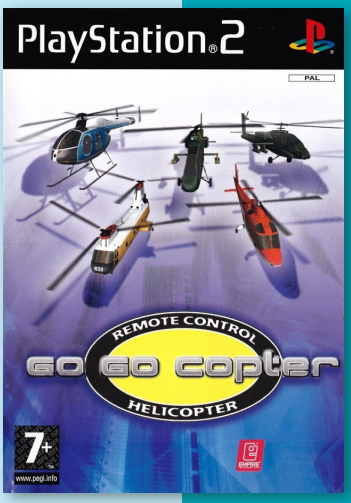


J P

Developer Aqua Systems
Publisher Aqua Systems, (eu) Empire Interactive
Release date (jp) March 13, 2003
Genre Simulation
Mode 1-2 Players

Using 12 different RC helicopters players explore levels like a house, a train station, and a haunted high school. Players can collect stars and complete missions that will help them earn new batteries, parts, and helicopters. Tumbling books, fans and air conditioning units threaten to send the RC out of control and crashing it.

The game feature four game modes; challenge mode, versus mode, adventure mode and a hidden mode.



Go Go Golf

6.6

Developer Magical Company (Mahou)
Publisher Magical Company, (eu) Midas Interactive
Release date (jp) September 21, 2000
Genre Sports
Mode 1-4 Players

Go Go Golf is a player golfing game for one to four, where there's only one human player the game provides the opposition.

The player(s) play as one of eight predefined golfing characters, each with their own strengths, on three golf courses which can be played in three ways:

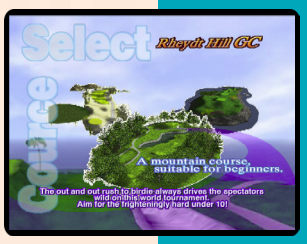
Stroke Play: here the match is played over eighteen holes and the player who completes the round in the fewest strokes wins

Match Play: where it is the player who wins the most holes who takes the match.

Tour: Here the objective is to win more than $1.5m in one season. In order to achieve this the player must win a qualifying match in May so that they can compete in a major tournament. There are four major golfing tournaments in Japan, two nationals the All Japan Masters and the Asian Open, and two internationals the International World Classic and the World Classic.

The game has an unusual, one button, style of gameplay. As the player shapes up to take their swing a shadowy outline appears behind them and the player must press Cross again at, or near to the top of the swing. On the downswing the player must press Cross again at the point of impact.

"mobygames.com"



J P

Go Kart Rally

6.5

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) April 20, 2007
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

Go Kart Rally is a Racing game, developed and published by Phoenix Games, which was released in Europe in 2007.

Players can choose from a line-up of karts and race in Tournament mode, get practice in Quick Race mode or go for records in Time Trials. The game only feature one player.

P

Go, Diego, Go! Great Dinosaur Rescue

3.5

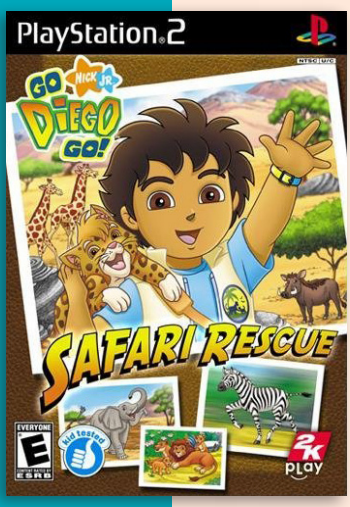
N P

Developer	High Voltage Software
Publisher	Take-Two Interactive, (au) 2K Play, (us) SCEA
Release date	(us) October 27, 2008
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

Great Dinosaur Rescue is set in Africa. Along with Diego, Juma, Baby Jaguar, and Alicia, children learn the fundamental skills of math, reading, language, and science. Designed specifically for ages 2-5, Go Diego Go! Great Dinosaur Rescue teaches children early reading, counting, colors, shapes, music, creativity, memory, basic Spanish, computer skills and problem solving.

Go, Diego, Go! Safari Rescue

7.3



Developer	High Voltage Software
Publisher	2K Play, (us) SCEA
Release date	(us) February 11, 2008
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

The second game in the Go, Diego, Go series, based on the Go, Diego, Go! TV program, introduces players to animals, people, and places. With Diego, children get an adventurous introduction to math, science and animals.

The game alternates between overhead exploration and the simple mini-games. These mini-games are impossible to fail.

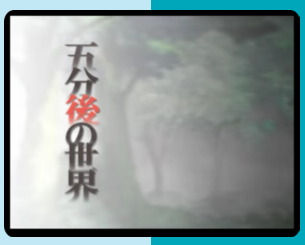
N P

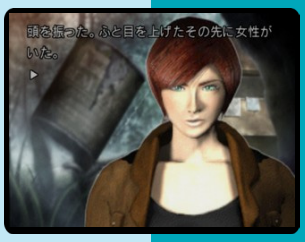
Gobuato no Sekai

Developer	Media Factory
Publisher	Media Factory
Release date	Visual novel
Genre	(jp) August 2, 2001
Mode	1 Player

Gofungo no Sekai: Five Minutes from nowhere is a visual novel divided into 8 chapters (with 7 different main characters but all of their stories are connected) based on Ryu Murakami's novel. One of the special features of the game is the time limit action sequences that appears sometimes during each chapter. In these sequences the player have a time limit to make an action and advance through the story.

"psxdatacenter.com"





J

2.7

GoDai: Elemental Force

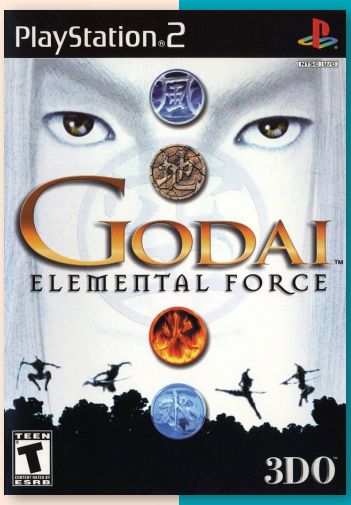
N P

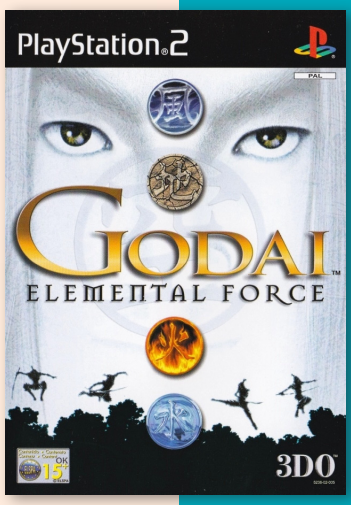
Developer	3DO
Publisher	3DO
Release date	(us) January 21, 2002
Genre	Action, Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

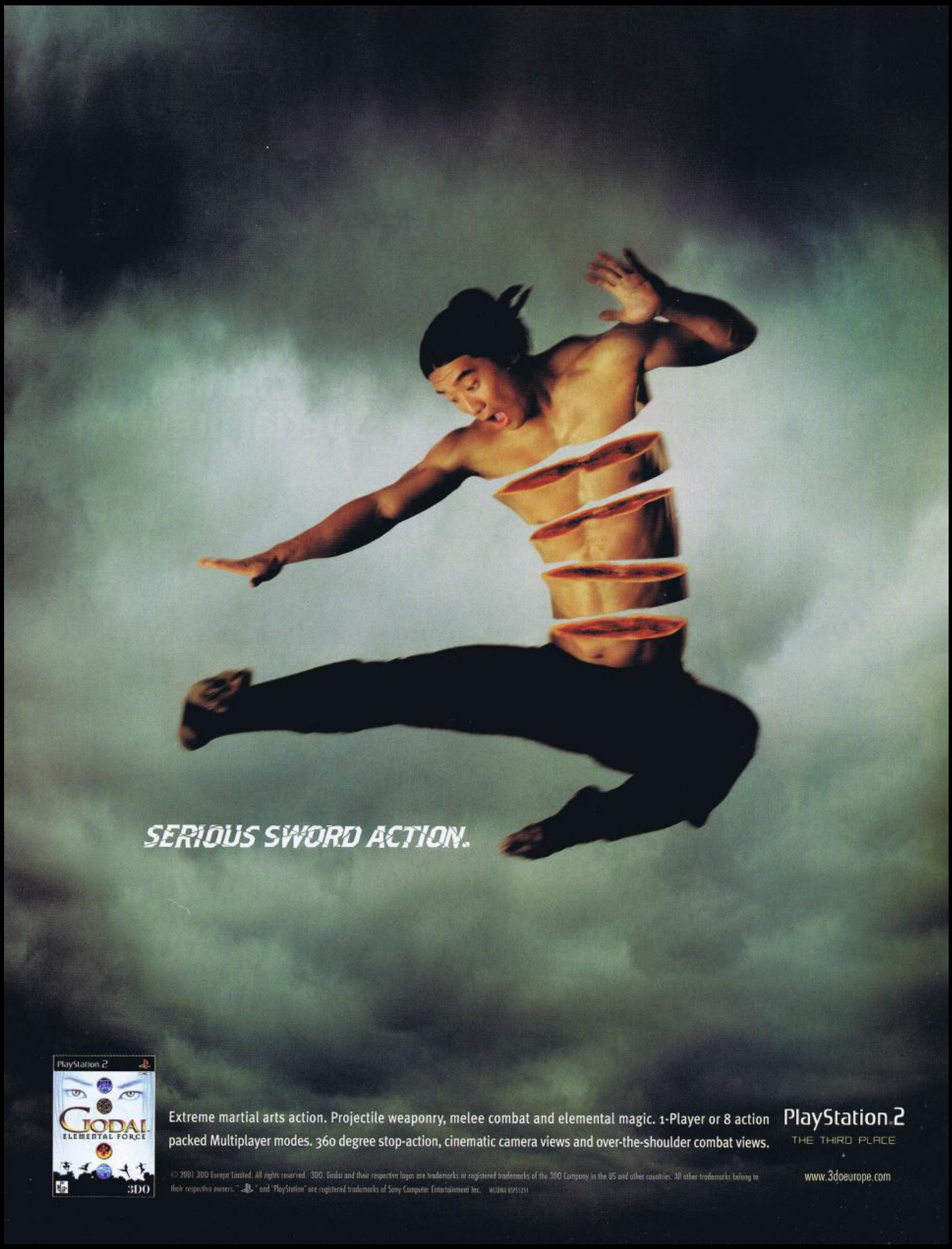
GoDai is a 3D action game with emphasis on melee combat. The game's environments are displayed through fixed camera angles.

The player controls a ninja named Hiro, who starts play unarmed but can collect a variety of Asian weapons throughout the game. These include blades such as swords and knives, spears and axes; all of which can be used to execute combo attacks. Larger weapons such as polearms have a longer reach, allowing Hiro to attack enemies without getting too close. Two weapons that the player has previously collected can be taken into each subsequent mission, more appear throughout the missions themselves, allowing Hiro to increase the amount of weapons he is carrying. Ranged weapons including shurikens and smoke bombs, and several types of ranged magical attacks like fireballs, can also be employed in tandem with close-quarters weapons.

Hiro possesses the ability to glide through the air by willpower alone, during which the player retains full control of Hiro's movement as he descends. The effect has been likened to wire-fu movies and takes the place of jumping in the game, allowing the player to bypass combat and traverse the game world.





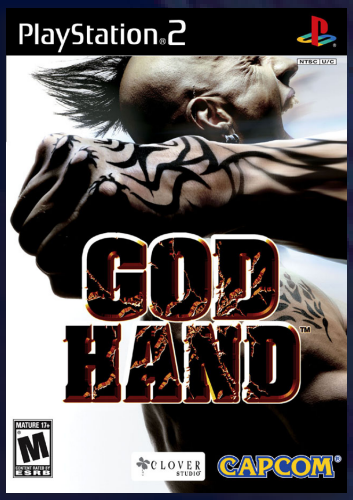

SERIOUS SWORD ACTION.
PlayStation 2
GODAI
ELEMENTAL FORCE
3DO
Extreme martial arts action. Projectile weaponry, melee combat and elemental magic. 1-Player or 8 action packed Multiplayer modes. 360 degree stop-action, cinematic camera views and over-the-shoulder combat views.
PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE
© 2001 3DO Europe Limited. All rights reserved. 3DO, Godai and their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of the 3DO Company in the US and other countries. All other trademarks belong to their respective owners. "" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.
www.3doeurope.com

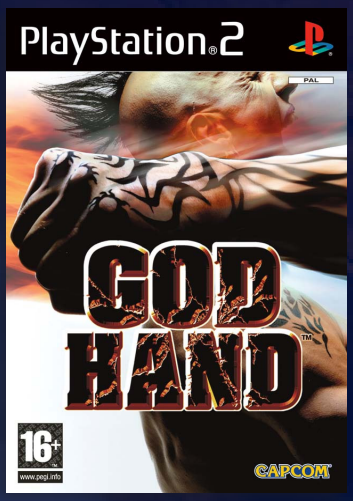
CLOVER
STUDIO
GOD
HAND
™
PlayStation.2
capcom.com/godhand

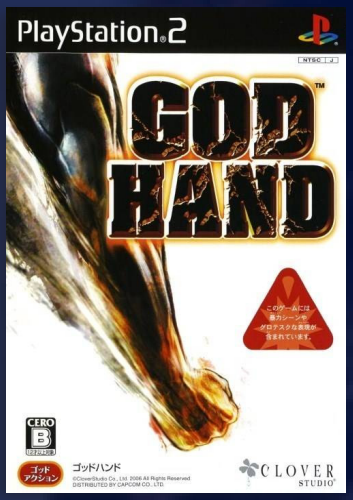
All Rights Reserved. DISTRIBUTED BY CAPCOM CO., LTD. Gold Hand, CloverStudio and the CloverStudio
rStudio Co., Ltd. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM LOGO are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD.
nny logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered
nt Software Association. All other trademarks are owned by their respective owners.

7.3

God Hand







JNP

Developer	Clover Studio
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	Beat-'em-up
Genre	(jp) September 14, 2006
Mode	1 Player

God Hand is a PlayStation 2 action beat 'em up directed by Shinji Mikami. It was re-released for the PS3 as a PS2 Classics downloadable game on the PlayStation Network. Mikami's desire was to create the game for hardcore gamers intermixed with a large amount of comic relief. It was Clover Studio's final video game.

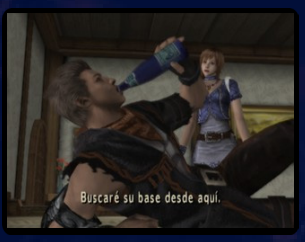
The game mixes western and Japanese-themed comedy, containing over-the-top characters and storyline events. The plot follows a martial artist Gene, protecting his companion and wielding a legendary pair of divine arms called "God Hands", in order to save the world from demons.

The 3D action game has the player moving in all directions, attacking with the face buttons and using special moves. The player can turn around using a button, and all actions outside of basic attacks are performed via a context sensitive button. Using the button allows the player, as Gene, to jump up ladders, pick up items, and use special attacks on abnormal enemies. Four dodge moves are mapped to the directions on the right analog stick. The player can assign any attacks, including the Circle, Triangle, Square and X buttons. Square allows the player to chain multiple attacks at once. There are over one hundred moves in the game for the player to choose from including basic jabs and punches to drunken-style and capoeira martial arts.

More powerful abilities in the game can be utilized in the player's "God Reel" (or "God Roulette"), a roulette wheel containing moves that the player chooses. These moves are limited to a number of "Roulette Orbs" that the player can increase by collecting "Skull Cards" found throughout each stage. God Reel techniques cost between one and three Roulette Orbs. Some moves send each opponents flying into the stratosphere, while others are simple punches or kicks to specific bodyparts. Another gameplay mechanic in the player's arsenal is the God Hand itself. As the player strikes and defeats enemies, his "Tension Gauge" goes up. The player can also evade attacks, taunt, use tension boosting attacks, or find cards within each stages to increase the bar. When it reaches a set amount, the player can remove the bracelet from Gene's arm to temporarily unleash the God Hand. In this state he is completely invincible and all of his attacks increase in both power and speed. By using various stat boosting items, the player can increase the size of his Tension Gauge to hold more power. While in combat, the player can monitor a "Difficulty Level" bar that dynamically adjusts to how much damage the player is dealing or receiving. If the player gets caught up in a flurry of punches and combos, the level will drop. If the player deals a large number of unanswered attacks to their enemies, then the level will increase. The bar consists of numerical levels one through three with a fourth level designated "Die" being the highest overall. During levels one and two, the enemies will not attack the player unless they are in his line of sight or he is attacking them. On levels three and Die, the enemies will attack regardless of

the camera position. Also, enemy attack strength increases as the levels increase; at level Die a fully maxed out player character can be killed in a few hits. Defeating enemies at higher Difficulty Levels earns the player more bonus points at the end of a stage. Additional techniques can be found in stages in the form of technique scrolls. Techniques and roulette moves can also be purchased or sold at the shop, located on the map screen. Also accessible from the map is a casino, which contains a number of minigames, including slots, blackjack, poker, chihuahua racing and a fighting arena.

The game was first announced in April 2006 along with the use of a small teaser page on the Clover Studio website. The game was developed by the team responsible for Resident Evil 4. Development was supervised by Shinji Mikami, best known for the Resident Evil series of survival horror games, and was produced by Atsushi Inaba. The original idea for God Hand came about during a conversation between the two about the current state of action games; they found that many games in the genre at the time focused on the use of weapons and had gotten away from hand to hand combat. Mikami later approached Inaba with a poster depicting two stylized fists, meant to exemplify the kind of original game he wanted the two to create. Originally, God Hand was to focus solely on "hardcore action" without much humor. However, after showing a trailer for the game at the 2006 E3 which contained some comic relief, the team decided to integrate a large amount of comedy into the game based on the viewers' reactions. Inaba stated that God Hand is *"aimed at hardcore gamers,"* which is shown in its hard difficulty. Unlike Viewtiful Joe and Ōkami, the design team had no particular goal when designing the graphical style of God Hand other than that they wanted it to look more realistic. Although God Hand appears to share many elements with manga and anime such as Fist of the North Star and MD Geist, none were actually used as inspiration for the game.



There are a few differences between the North American and Japanese versions of the game. Among minor alterations, such a few signs being changed, the "Chihuahua Curry" power-up was renamed to "Puppy Pizza" in the English localization. A free Roulette called "Pan Drop", which gives the user short-lived invincibility in return for taking some damage, was removed from the American version. However, another technique called "Head Slicer," which allows the player to decapitate an enemy, was featured in the North American localization, instead of the Japanese one due to CERO censorship policy in Japan. Masafumi Takada from Grasshopper Manufacture composed the game's soundtrack, with one track contributed by Jun Fukuda. The score contains many throwbacks to older video game music, and is heavily influenced by 1960s and 1970s theme songs and other genres, including techno, rave, rock and funk. Takada was told by Mikami that due to the game's hardcore nature, the soundtrack should be composed to *"relax things a little bit"*. Takada's score utilizes motifs in the game's boss battle songs because many of them are fought more than once; Takada hoped that using different arrangements and orchestrations would remind players of older encounters with each boss.

It received an overall mixed response from critics and sold only modestly upon its release in Japan, making it the fifth best-selling game during the week of its release in Japan, selling 48,280 units.

GOD OF WAR™

The most disturbing game in history.

Plunder through the violent world of Greek Mythology. Slay such legendary beasts as Cyclops, Medusa and Minotaur as

"PS" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "PS2" is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. All Rights Reserved. God Of War is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. © 2005 Sony

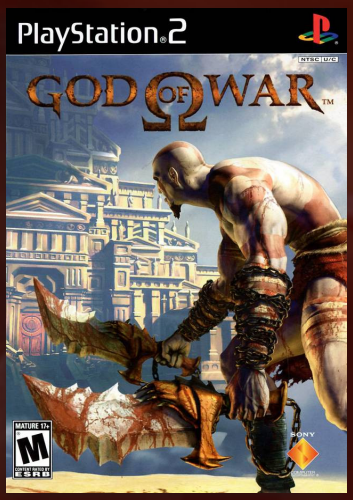
fun,
anyone?
PlayStation.2

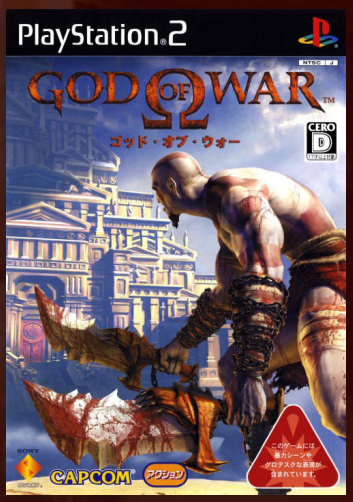
you seek revenge against the God Of War. Exclusive to PlayStation.2. www.godofwargame.com

Computer Entertainment America Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. SPS1641

God of War

9.4





J N P

Developer	SCE Santa Monica
Publisher	(us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE, (ko) SCEI, (jp) Capcom
Release date	(us) March 22, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure, Hack and slash
Mode	1 Player

God of War is a third-person hack and slash action-adventure developed by Santa Monica Studio. It is the first installment in the series of the same name and the third chronologically.

Loosely based on Greek mythology, it is set in ancient Greece with vengeance as its central motif. The player controls the protagonist Kratos, a Spartan warrior who serves the Olympian Gods. The goddess Athena tasks Kratos with killing Ares, the God of War and Kratos' former mentor who tricked Kratos into killing his wife and daughter. As Ares besieges Athens out of hatred for Athena, Kratos embarks on a quest to find the one object capable of stopping the god once and for all: Pandora's Box.

God of War is a third-person single player action-adventure game with hack and slash elements, viewed from a fixed camera perspective. The player controls the character Kratos in combo-based combat, platforming, and puzzle game elements, and battles Greek mythologyical foes that include undead soldiers, harpies, minotaurs, Medusa and the Gorgons, cyclopes, wraiths, Sirens, satyrs, centaurs, cerberuses, and boss opponents—the Hydra and a giant minotaur known as Pandora's Guardian. Platforming elements require the player to climb walls and ladders, jump across chasms, swing on ropes, and balance across beams to proceed through sections of the game. Some puzzles are simple, such as moving a box so that the player can use it as a jumping-off point to access a pathway unreachable with normal jumping, but others are more complex, such as finding several items across different areas of the game to unlock one door.

Throughout the game world, the player finds green, red, and blue chests that contain orbs of the corresponding color. Green orbs replenish the player's health, blue orbs replenish magic, and red orbs provide experience for upgrading weapons and magic and replenish the Rage meter, which, if full, allows for the usage of the Rage of the Gods ability. Red orbs are also collected by killing foes and destroying certain inanimate objects. The player can also find Gorgon Eyes and Phoenix Feathers that increase the length of the Health and Magic Meters, respectively.

Kratos' main weapon is the Blades of Chaos: a pair of blades attached to chains wrapped around the character's wrists and forearms. In gameplay, the blades can be swung in various maneuvers. Later in the game, Kratos acquires a secondary weapon called the Blade of Artemis: a large sword that offers alternative combat options. Kratos also learns to use four magical abilities (like Zeus' Fury, which allows him to throw lightning bolts at distant targets) which allow him to kill individual and multiple targets. Other magical abilities include Medusa's Gaze, Poseidon's Rage, and Army of Hades. A relic called Poseidon's Trident allows Kratos to breathe underwater and navigate through this environment. Early in the game, Kratos acquires a special ability called Rage of the Gods, which provides temporary invulnerability and increased at-

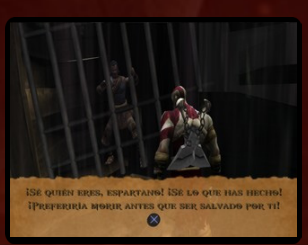
tack damage.

In combat, a quick time event (QTE) is initiated when the player has weakened a strong foe. The player performs a sequence of actions on the gamepad shortly after an image of its circle button appears as an on-screen prompt. This allows for limited control of Kratos during a QTE cinematic sequence, which, if successful, ends the battle; failure usually results in damaging Kratos. Similar in function is a quick time sex mini-game that occurs when Kratos encounters female twins; this became a regular feature throughout the series until God of War: Ghost of Sparta (2010).

When the game is completed, a challenge mode — ten trials called the Challenge of the Gods — is unlocked; this requires players to complete a series of specific tasks. The player may unlock bonus costumes for Kratos, behind-the-scenes videos, and concept art of the characters and environments, as rewards. Completion of each difficulty level unlocks additional rewards.

Santa Monica began development of God of War in 2002, under the working title Dark Odyssey, and unveiled it two years later at SCEA Santa Monica Gamers' Day 2004. In a meeting with GameSpot at the 2004 E3, the developers said there would be 15 to 25 different attacks with the player's main weapon in the final game, with a free-form combo system that would allow players to combine moves in almost any order. GameSpot said the developers described the gameplay *"as merging the action of Devil May Cry with the puzzle-solving of Ico"* and noted that players would be able to *"sunder enemies with a single move, such as by ripping them in half"*.

Game Director and creator David Jaffe confirmed the game would be a cinematic presentation. He said that at E3, they got to see



where players were having issues with the camera system and said, *"we are doing extensive focus tests, and using data compiled from E3, to find and fix the problem areas"* of the cameras. He said he had the confidence that the team would fix the problems before the game's release. However, he said if players *"hate cinematic camera systems, nothing we can do will help you like the God of War cameras"*. The game uses Santa Monica's Kinetica engine, which they developed for their previous game, Kinetica (2001).

Although the game is based on Greek mythology, the development team gave themselves *"lots of freedom"* to modify the myths, and Jaffe said they took the *"coolest aspects of the subject"* and wrote a story using those elements. In an interview for Eurogamer, he said while the idea for God of War was his own, the concept owed a debt to Capcom because he had played Onimusha and said *"let's do that with Greek Mythology"*. He was inspired in part by the 1981 feature film, Clash of the Titans, saying, *"the real high concept for me was ... merging it with Heavy Metal magazine"*. He said he liked both *"the kids stuff ... with Greek Mythology"* and the idea of adding more adult themes such as sex and violence.

After E3 2004, Jaffe told IGN that the creative team's goal was to *"make the player feel brutal, letting their inner beast free and just going nuts"*. He said the game's combat system would have an unparalleled degree of freedom. The team designed two systems of combat: a *"macro"* system, which gives players the choice between normal combat, magical attacks, or using the QTE feature to kill a foe; and a *"macro"* system, where players press a sequence of buttons to perform different attacks. Puzzles were implemented, including self-contained ones that incorporate up to three rooms

of the game, and global puzzles that spread across four or five areas. Jaffe compared the game to the popular Prince of Persia series—which also incorporates puzzle and platforming elements—and said that while each puzzle in that series is a slight variation of the last, *"each puzzle in God of War is its own beast"*.

Frank Cifaldi of Gamasutra covered a speech by Jaffe on the development of God of War at the 2006 D.I.C.E. Summit in Las Vegas. Cifaldi said *"God of War was a rare opportunity for a game designer"* because Sony gave Jaffe nearly complete creative control to develop a game on his terms with a substantial budget. He stated that Jaffe wanted to make the game *"out of passion, not fear, and that it would be a game that [Jaffe] himself, as a game player, would want to play"*. Jaffe said the 1981 film Raiders of the Lost Ark also inspired the development of God of War; he wanted to make players feel like he felt as a child watching that film, but did not want to put the player in the role of an adventurer, referencing The Legend of Zelda games. He elaborated that God of War was designed to be simplistic and forward-moving, but the game *"is not innovative or unique, and that's intentional"*. Jaffe said that their system was shallow and *"it forced the team to constantly create new content to trapeze the player from one area of interest to the next"*. He said he understood modular game design—the need to have great looking, high-detail levels without having to build and texture every minuscule piece of the environment—but *"[he] was going to get bored"* if they did not step outside of those boundaries.

The soundtrack was composed by Gerard K. Marino, Ron Fish, Winifred Phillips, Mike Reagan, Cris Velasco, Winnie Waldron, and Marcello De Francisci.

David Jaffe, the Director of God of War, was portrayed as a after a sexist by the blogger, Kate Cocks, who wrote a hit piece of him and his game, painting him as a machauvinism, on a defunct blog site named Kotaku/Gawker (a site that was also the creator of the movement, "Gamergate"). This ended up in a feud with him and the site owner, a fake-haired degenerate, apparently named Stephen Totilo.

God of War received "universal acclaim" according to Metacritic with a score of 94 out of 100, and a score of 93.58% from GameRankings. Tom Lane of CNN wrote, *"God of War is the type of game that makes you remember why you play games in the first place."* He said it is addictive and the action is balanced with a modest amount of puzzle and platforming elements. He praised how quickly it progresses and said it *"is one of the most violent [games] on the market"*.

Raymond Padilla of GameSpy said the gameplay is *"excellent"* and it has *"some of the*

goriest, most exaggerated, and over-the-top violence I've ever seen". He praised the combo system for being generous, with players easily able to execute attack combinations, but added that it can challenge players who *"throw themselves into the system"*. Chris Sell of PAL Gaming Network wrote that the most enjoyable aspect of the combat is its simplicity. He said the QTEs are *"superbly enjoyable"*, *"highly satisfying"*, and most entertaining during boss fights. In regards to combining combat with platforming, Sell said, *"God of War pulls it off perfectly."*

Lane said the story is *"compelling"*, while Sell stated that it is well laid out and rarely stalls. Padilla wrote, *"God of War is the best thing to happen to Greek mythology"* since Harry Hamlin played Perseus in Clash of the Titans. He praised the sound as very strong, but felt that some of the voice acting and music tracks are overstated. Kristan Reed of Eurogamer said the audio is *"a stunningly evocative example of a well-judged dramatic soundtrack and thunderous effects"*.

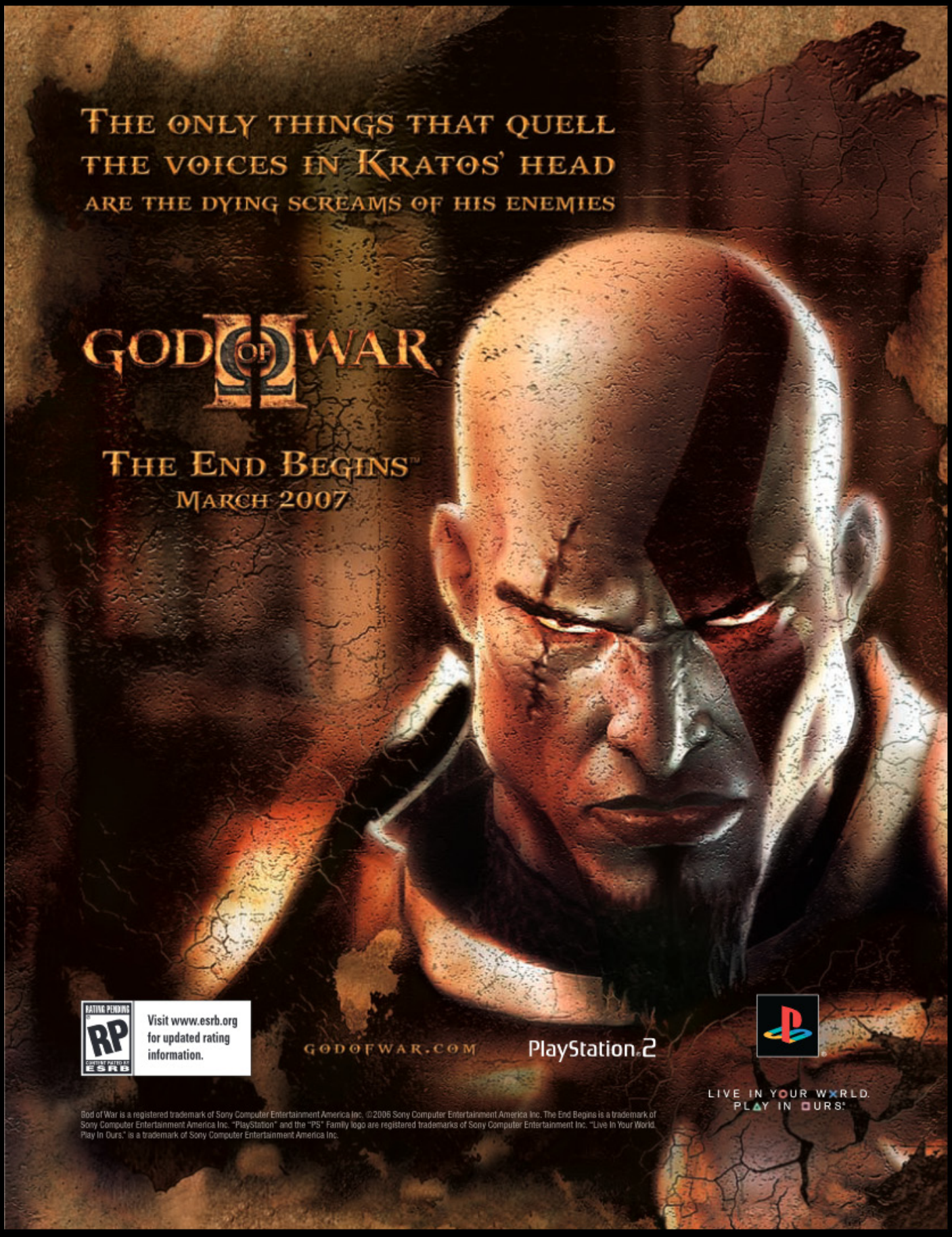
Sell stated that the graphics are *"quite possibly the best on the PS2"* and rival games on the Xbox. He said the character models are *"excellent"* and each level has its own distinctive feel. Eric Blattberg of PlayStation Universe praised the graphics for being seamless, realistic, and capable of being able to run at 480p on a widescreen television. He said the textures are *"great"*, and the environments are *"stunning and unbelievably detailed."* Mikel Reparaz of GamesRadar noted the amount of detail, elaborating that as a consequence of the aging hardware of the PS2, "the graphics occasionally stutter or even slow down." He still gave the game a perfect score, concluding, *"these problems are minor nits next to God of War's creative design, riveting plot and sheer balls-out fun. One of the best action titles on the PS2, God of War stands out as an ultraviolent masterpiece."*

God of War won several "Game of the Year" awards. At the 2005 Spike Video Game Awards, it was named "Best Action Game" and David Jaffe won "Designer of the Year" for the game. It was also a nominee for "Game of the Year", "Best Performance by a Human Male" (TC Carson as Kratos), and "Best Original Score". At the 2006 Interactive Achievement Awards, it won several awards, including "Overall Game of the Year", "Console Game of the Year", and "Action/Adventure Game of the Year". In 2009, IGN named God of War the seventh-best PlayStation 2 game of all time. In November 2012, Complex magazine named God of War the eleventh-best PlayStation 2 game of all time.

God of War sold more than 4.6 million copies worldwide, making it the eleventh best-selling PlayStation 2 game of all time.

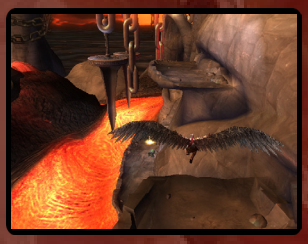
An official novelization of the game, titled God of War, was announced in July 2009, along with a novelization of God of War II. It was written by Matthew Stover and Robert E. Vardeman, and was published in 2010. The novel recounts the events of the game and offers deeper insights into its story, explaining that Athena wanted Kratos to kill Ares and explaining how she manipulated the other gods, with the exception of Zeus, into aiding Kratos.

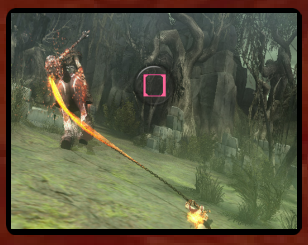
A film adaptation was also in the works, and announced in 2005. As of August, 2018, the movie is without a director, no actors have been confirmed, a release date has not been set,[91] but the script has been "turned in".


THE ONLY THINGS THAT QUELL
THE VOICES IN KRATOS' HEAD
ARE THE DYING SCREAMS OF HIS ENEMIES
GOD OF WAR II
THE END BEGINS™
MARCH 2007
RATING PENDING
RP
ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org
for updated rating
information.
GODOFWAR.COM
PlayStation.2
LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.
God of War is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ©2006 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. The End Begins is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

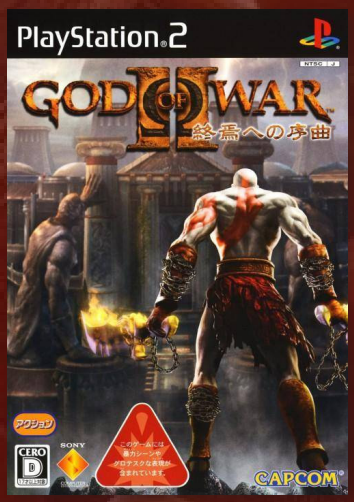
God of War II

9.3





Developer	SCE Santa Monica
Publisher	(us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE, (ko) SCEI, (jp) Capcom
Release date	(us) March 13, 2007
Genre	Action-adventure, Hack and slash
Mode	xxx



J N P

God of War II is a hack and slash action-adventure developed by Santa Monica Studio. First released for the PS2, it is the second installment in the God of War series and the sixth chronologically. The player character is protagonist Kratos, the new God of War who killed the former, Ares. Kratos is betrayed by Zeus, the King of the Olympian Gods, who strips him of his godhood and kills him. Slowly dragged to the Underworld, he is saved by the Titan Gaia, who instructs him to find the Sisters of Fate, as they can allow him to travel back in time, avert his betrayal, and take revenge on Zeus.

The gameplay of God of War II is very similar to that of its predecessor. The player controls Kratos through a combination of combat, platforming, and puzzle game elements. It also keeps the concept of using minigames to perform bloody kills. Another element that returns from the previous game is Kratos ability to find Red Orbs to level up his weapons and magic and Gorgon Eyes and Phoenix Feathers to increase his health and magic meters.

Like the previous God of War, Kratos receives numerous weapons and magical powers all throughout his quest, given to him by certain characters, or taken from his enemies. These items offer small enhancements in terms of gameplay over God of War, such as Icarus' Wings (an item cut from the original game), which allows the player to glide short distances, the Golden Fleece, which allows players to repel projectiles, and the Blades of Athena, an item returning from the first game which now lets players swing from highlighted objects.

Kratos retains the relic Poseidon's Trident from the original installment, and gains new relics; the Amulet of the Fates, the Golden Fleece, and Icarus' Wings, each being required to advance through certain stages of the game. For example, the Amulet of the Fates slows time, but this does not affect Kratos and allows puzzle-solving that can not be achieved in normal game time. The Amulet of the Fates has limited usage before needing to be recharged (which occurs automatically and is represented by the Amulet of

the Fates Meter). The Golden Fleece deflects enemy projectiles back at the enemies (used to solve certain puzzles). Icarus' Wings allows Kratos to glide across large chasms that cannot be crossed with normal jumping.

This game's challenge mode is called the Challenge of the Titans (seven trials), and requires players to complete a series of specific tasks (e.g., kill all enemies without being attacked). The player may unlock bonus costumes for Kratos, behind-the-scenes videos, and concept art of the characters and environments, as rewards, as well as usage of the abilities found in the urns during the first playthrough. Completion of each difficulty level unlocks additional rewards, as does collecting twenty eyes from defeated cyclopes. A new mode, called Arena of the Fates, allows players to set difficulty levels and choose their own opponents to improve their skills.

A sequel to God of War was first teased at the end of its credits, which stated, "Kratos Will Return". God of War II was officially announced at the 2006 GDC. God of War Game Director David Jaffe stepped down and became the Creative Director of its sequel. God of War's lead animator Cory Barlog assumed the role of Game Director. In an interview with Computer and Video Games in June 2006, Barlog said that while working on the first few drafts of script, he studied the mythology extensively. He said that the mythology is so large that *"the real difficulty is picking things that really fit within the story of Kratos as well as being easy to swallow for audiences."* Although he loves the idea of teaching things through storytelling (in this case Greek mythology), Barlog said, *"you can't let your story get bogged down by that."* He said that in the game, players would see *"a larger view of Kratos' role within the mythological world."* He also said that he liked the idea of a trilogy, but there were no plans *"as of right now."*

Like God of War, the game uses Santa Monica's Kinetica engine. Senior combat designer Derek Daniels said that for God of War II, they were basing the magical attacks on elements (e.g., air and earth). He said the combat system was updated so that it flowed smoothly between attacks and switching between weapons and magic. He said that they were working for a similar balance of puzzle solving, exploration, and combat seen in the first game, and they used elements that worked in that game as a base for the overall balance. Unlike God of War where magic had a small role, Daniels said that for God of War II, their goal was to make magic an integral part of the combat system and to make it more refined. Barlog said the game would feature new creatures and heroes from the mythol-

ogy, and he wanted to put more boss battles in it. Commenting on multiplayer options, Barlog said that *"there are possibilities for that but it is not something we are doing right now."* He said that he felt that God of War is a single-player experience, and although multiplayer *"would be cool,"* it did not appeal to him to work on. As for a PSP installment, he said that he thought it *"would be freaking awesome,"* but not something he had time to work on and it was Sony's decision whether or not to make a PSP installment.

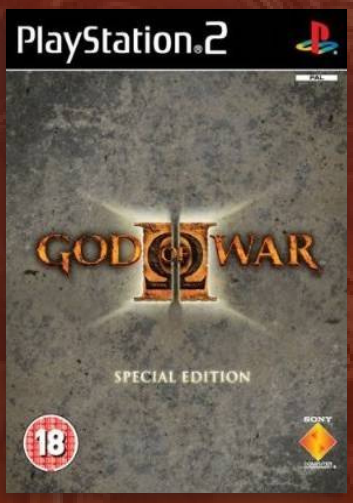
In an interview with IGN in February 2007, Barlog said that his goals for God of War II were to continue the previous game's story, expand on several elements, and to feature more epic moments as opposed to cinematics during gameplay. He said there were many additions to the game, but they did not differ greatly from the style of the previous game. Set-pieces and large scale epic moments were reworked *"so that each battle you have really feels epic and unique."* Barlog also hinted that another sequel would be made; he said, *"The story has not yet been completed. The end has only just begun."*

In another interview with IGN, both Jaffe and Barlog said that they did not view God of War II as a sequel, but rather a continuation of the previous game. Jaffe said that they did not want to include the Roman numeral number two (II) in the title for this reason, but they did not want the title to convey the impression it was an expansion pack. Both Jaffe and Barlog said that the reason God of War II appeared on the PS2 instead of the PS3—which was released four months prior to God of War II—was because *"there's a 100 million people out there that will be able to play God of War II as soon as it launches."* Barlog assured that the game would be playable on the newer platform, which had PlayStation 2 backwards-compatibility.

Four of the voice actors from the previous installment returned to reprise their roles, including Terrence C. Carson and Keith Ferguson, who voiced Kratos and the boat captain, respectively. and Lakhesis, respectively. Actor Harry Hamlin was chosen to voice the character Perseus because of his previous portrayal of the same character in the 1981 feature film Clash of the Titans. Although removed early in the game's development, Cam Clarke is credited for the voice of Hercules. Keythe Farley was the voice director alongside Kris Zimmerman and Gordon Hunt.

The North American version was packaged in a two-disc set. The first disc contained the game, and the second disc was dedicated to the game's development, including a diary of the game's production. The PAL version was released as two different editions: a single-disc standard edition

PAL
Special Edition



and a two-disc "Special Edition" with different box art and a bonus DVD. Upon release, the game was banned in the United Arab Emirates due to *"one topless scene"*.

Upon release, God of War II was commercially successful in multiple markets. In North America, it sold 833,209 copies by the end of March 2007, twice as many copies as the next-best selling game. It was the best-selling game in the UK in the first week of release. It sold over one million copies in the first three months after release, and in June 2012, Sony reported it sold more than 4.24 million copies worldwide.

The game and its predecessor, God of War, were released in North America on November 17, 2009 as part of the God of War Collection, featuring remastered ports of both games for the PS3, with upscaled graphics and support for Trophies.

As a pre-order incentive, the demo disc of God of War II was made available to all customers who pre-ordered the game. On March 1, 2007, Sony held a media event that featured scantily clad women and a dead goat in Athens as part of the game's marketing campaign. The following month, the Daily Mail learned of the event from the UK Official PlayStation Magazine, called it a *"depraved promotion stunt"*, and reported that Member of Parliament and anti-video game violence campaigner Keith Vaz said he would understand if the incident resulted in a boycott of Sony products. In response, Sony said the event had been sensationalized with hyperbole and that the article contained several inaccuracies, but apologized for the event.

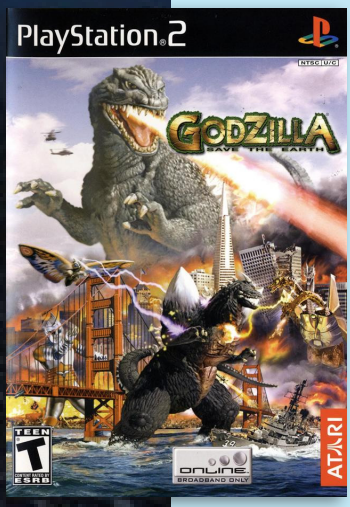
Regarded as one of the best PlayStation 2 and action games of all time, God of War II received "universal acclaim" according to Metacritic with a score of 93 out of 100, and a score of 92.68% from GameRankings. It has been praised for its story and improvements over its predecessor, such as gameplay and graphics. Chris Roper of IGN said that God of War II is *"one of gaming's most intense and engaging experiences available."* He said it *"is practically devoid"* of the minor flaws of the original, citing an example that players can now quickly navigate wall climbing, such as being able to vertically slide down walls. Furthering his praise of the gameplay, he said that it is one of the most *"polished and refined experiences...in gaming."* Although he said that the combat mechanics were practically identical to the original, he had no complaints, stating it is *"for good reason as it was already perfect the first time out."*

Kristan Reed of Eurogamer said that *"God of War II sports one of the most satisfyingly honed game designs we've ever come across."* He said that it would not overwhelm players and that it motivates them to improve their skills. He said that the balance *"always feels spot-on,"* and the *"learning curve is just right,"* adding that the magic attacks are more useful than those in God of War. He also said that God of War II's gameplay, like the original, *"finds a comfortable middle ground"* between hardcore and casual players. Alex Navarro of GameSpot praised the pace of the game and the puzzle designs, and said the *"scale of some of the levels is unbelievably massive."* He also said that the story is interesting because it is more about what happens around Kratos, than what happens to him.

Both IGN and GameSpot consider God of War II to be the *"swan song"* of the PlayStation 2 era. In 2007, it was awarded "PlayStation Game of the Year" at the 25th annual Golden Joystick Awards, and UGO awarded it "PS2 Game of the Year". At the 2007 Spike Video Game Awards, it was a nominee for "Best Action Game" and "Best Original Score". At the 12th Satellite Awards, God of War II received the Outstanding Platform Action/Adventure Game award. At the 2007 BAFTA Video Game Awards, God of War II received the "Story and Character" and "Technical Achievement" awards, and was a nominee for "Action and Adventure", "Original Score", and "Use of Audio". In 2009, IGN named God of War II the second-best PlayStation 2 game of all time—five ahead of its predecessor. In November 2012, Complex magazine named God of War II the best PlayStation 2 game of all time—where God of War was named the eleventh-best—and also considered it better than its successor, God of War III.

Godzilla: Save the Earth

6.2



Developer	Pipeworks Software, Inc.
Publisher	Atari
Release date	(us) November 2, 2004
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1 -2 (4) Players

Godzilla: Save the Earth is a 3-D Fighting game, somewhat of a sequel to Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee. Players choose from among 18 monsters, previously seen in Godzilla movies, with which to engage in battle and destruction. Each monster comes with a variety of punches, kicks, grabs, throws, blocks and ranged attacks. In addition, each monster has a variety of unique moves activated by combinations of buttons.

J N P

Godzilla Unleashed

3.8

N P

Developer	Pipeworks Software, Inc.
Publisher	Atari
Release date	(us) November 20, 2007
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 (-4) Players

Godzilla: Unleashed is set during a series of unnatural disasters across Earth due to unexplained appearances of large crystals, where the Vortaak alien race are invading once again. The game features over 20 kaiju and mechas from all three Godzilla eras; as well as two newly created Toho approved creations. It is a sequel to both Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee and Godzilla: Save the Earth.

Like its predecessors, Godzilla Unleashed plays as a 3D fighting game with the option to play with two to four monsters at a time, with or without teams. Monsters can use one of seven "Power Surges", which are temporary abilities that can be used only once per battle, per monster. Surges increase certain traits, like for example the Fire Surge increases damage dealt and Speed Surge increases speed. They can also decrease abilities like Shield Surge, which increases defense while slowing movement. Others can improve and damage others like Radiation Surge that improves health regeneration while impairing that of nearby monsters. Before the Surge is over, monsters can induce a powerful shockwave attack. In the single player Story Mode, multiple Power Surges can be collected through defeating an enemy monster afflicted with the Surge.

8.3

Gokujou Seitokai

J

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) September 15, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Based on the manga/anime series, Gokujou Seitokai is a love sim where players take the role of a teacher in training at a high school. Over a the course of three weeks, he'll get to have individually teaching for the sixteen students.

The game is split into adventure and mini-game sequences. During adventure parts, players engage in conversations. The mini game mode contribute to the relationship with the girls.

.

Gokuraku Jan Premium

Developer	DigiCube
Publisher	DigiCube
Release date	(jp) July 31, 2003
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1-2 Players

Gokuraku Jongg Premium is an enhanced port of the mahjong puzzle Windows game Gokuraku Jongg which includes several new modes. Time Attack mode gives the player a 3-minute time limit to earn the highest score possible, Mission 16 mode gives the player 16 different mahjong hands to complete in a single play, and Yakuman Attack mode asks the player to get as many Yakuman (the highest-scoring Mahjong hands) as possible.

J

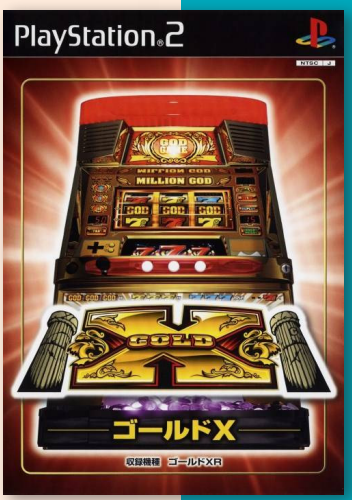
Gold X

J

Developer	Nippon Amuse
Publisher	Nippon Amuse
Release date	(jp) November 27, 2003
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

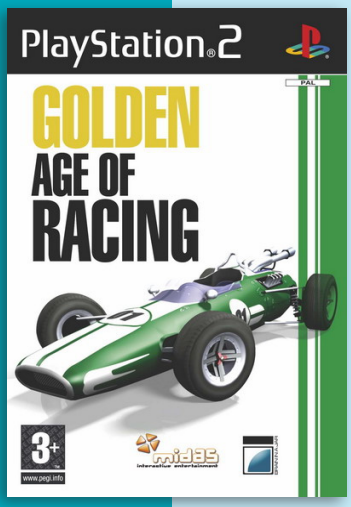
Gold X i a pachinko slot simulator based upon the Gold XR machine.

The game reproduces the playing cabinet design and its LCD with 3D polygons. It also feature a "data panel function" which display data on numerical values such as number of plays, number of earned medals, number of GG, etc. Including a "capture function" which display opportunity, reel arrangement, setting function, etc.



Golden Age of Racing

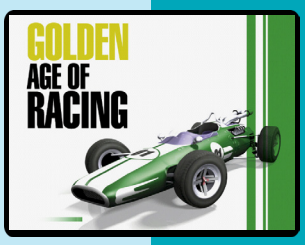
6.8



Developer	Brain in a Jar
Publisher	Midas Interactive Entertainment
Release date	(eu) September 2, 2005
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Golden Age of Racing is a one or two player game based on the racing cars of the 1960's. The game has ten courses, three levels of difficulty and five cars which can be played in Time Challenge, Exhibition and Championship modes. There are multiple liveries for each car but only one is immediately available, the rest have to be unlocked by winning races.

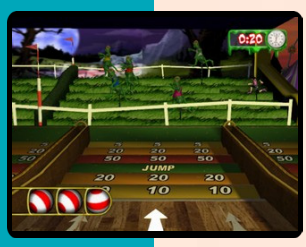
"mobygames.com"



P

Goosebumps Horrorland

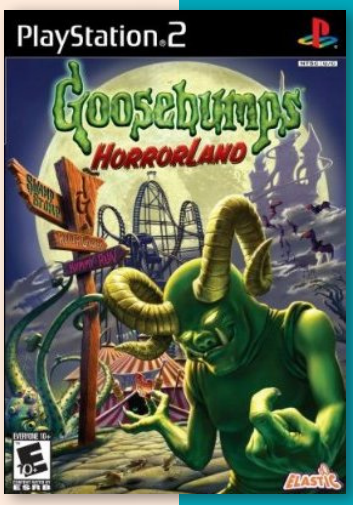
6.2



N

Developer	Gusto Games
Publisher	Scholastic, Inc.
Release date	(us) October 30, 2008
Genre	Action, Mini-games
Mode	1-2 Players

The plot follows a young child and his/her friends trapped in HorrorLand, where they must make their way through mini games to escape the evil theme park. The game have five main areas: Vampire Village (which serves as a hub connecting all the others), Mad Labs, Terror Tombs, Fever Swamp, and the Carnival of Screams. Several of these areas are references to classic Goosebumps books or previous depictions of HorrorLand.



Gottlieb Pinball Classics

7.3

Developer	Farsight Studios
Publisher	System 3
Release date	(eu) July 26, 2006
Genre	Pinball
Mode	1-4 Players

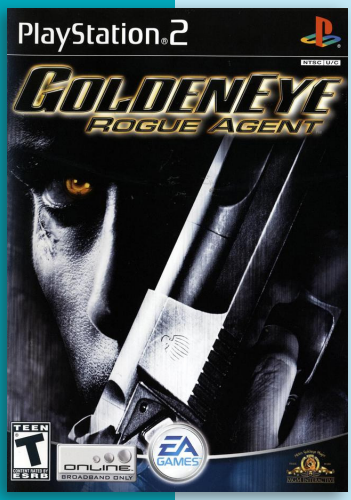
Pinball Hall of Fame brings eight classic tables from 50s to the 90s to the modern day by realizing them in full 3d with the original sounds. Players can choose from tables like Ace High, Central Park, Big Shot, Genie, Black Hole, Victory, Tee'd Off and a secret unlockable table.

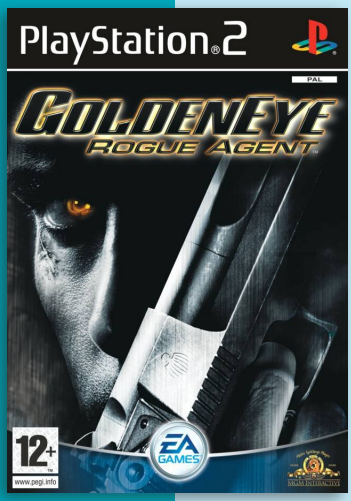
Players can also be able to unlock additional gameplay modes, artwork, information and little distraction games like a love tester machine.

P

GoldenEye: Rogue Agent

6.0





J N P

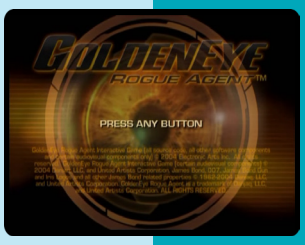
Developer	EA LA
Publisher	EA Games
Release date	(us) November 22, 2004
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

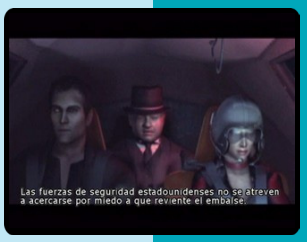
In GoldenEye: Rogue Agent, the player takes the role of an ex-MI6 agent, who is recruited by Auric Goldfinger (a member of a powerful unnamed criminal organisation based on Ian Fleming's SPECTRE) to assassinate his rival Dr. No. Several other characters from the Bond series make appearances throughout the game, including Pussy Galore, Oddjob, Xenia Onatopp and Francisco Scaramanga.

Despite its name and being part of the James Bond universe, the game has no relation to the 1995 film or the 1997 video game of the same name. In this setting the game's protagonist is given the name 'GoldenEye' after he loses his eye and receives a gold-colored cybernetic replacement. Electronic Arts has listed the title as a spin-off that do not make part of the canon they have built with Tomorrow Never Dies (1999).

GoldenEye: Rogue Agent is a first-person shooter, played across eight levels. The player can use various types of handheld weapons throughout the game, as well as the GoldenEye, which has four abilities: MRI vision, allowing the player to see through walls; EM hack, allowing the player to hack electronic systems, machines, and enemies' weapons; a polarity shield, which deflects incoming bullets; and a magnetic field, which allows the player to send enemies flying to their deaths. Each ability is granted to the player as the game progresses. Each ability requires a certain amount of energy, seen on a meter. After using an ability, the meter slowly recharges itself.

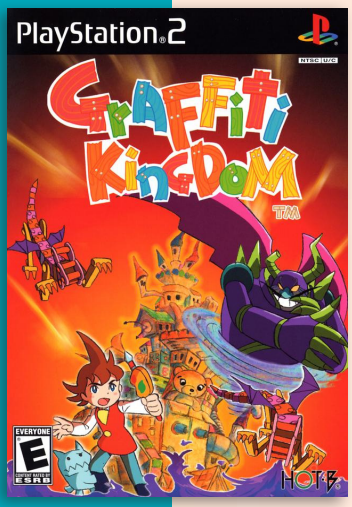
The game featured a highly customizable multiplayer component with four-player split screen play, as well as online play which supported up to 8 players. On October 1, 2006, the servers were shut down due to "inactivity" online. Players can unlock additional customization options, skins, maps, and gametype variations by playing through Story Mode earning Octopus tokens based on performance. There are some locked skins such as Oddjob, Dr. No, and Xenia Onatopp. There are also locked maps such as the Pump Room, Carver's Press, the Vault Core, the Lower Turbine, and Dr. No's reactor.





Graffiti Kingdom

7.1



Developer	Taito Corporation
Publisher	Taito, (eu) 505 Game Street, (us) Hot-B
Release date	(jp) September 22, 2004
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1-2 Players

Graffiti Kingdom is an action role-playing game and the sequel to Magic Pengel: The Quest for Color. As in the prequel, the player is able to create characters (known as "Graffiti Creatures") by drawing its body parts and assigning a function (such as "leg" or "head") to each part; however, unlike the previous game, its attacks and movement can also be customized. Additional functions are added as the player's level increases, and new attacks can be obtained by "capturing" other creatures.

The versatility of this feature has attracted considerable popularity, largely in Japan—a number of players have created detailed characters based both on original designs and those from existing video games, anime and other media.

While combat in Magic Pengel used a turn-based battle system similar to Rock, Paper, Scissors, Graffiti Kingdom is a more action-oriented platform game, although it retains some RPG-style elements such as the ability to level up.

The music is composed by Yasunori Mitsuda, who is most notable for his work on Chrono Trigger, Chrono Cross, and Xenogears.

J N P

Groove Rider: Slot Car Racing

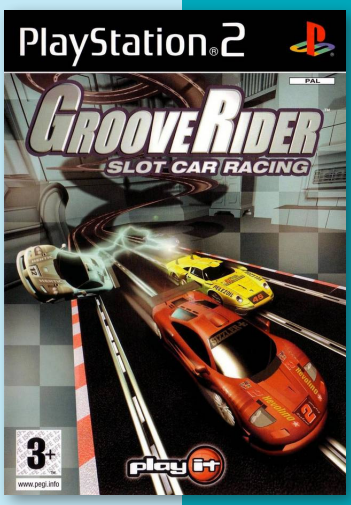
6.7

P

Developer	King of the Jungle
Publisher	Play It!
Release date	(eu) January 28, 2005
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Grooverider is a slot-car inspired arcade racer. In this game players race against three other cars around a track inside different rooms of a luxury apartment.

There are three different difficulties, or voltages, each faster than the last. There are a selection of cars to race in: British classics, 70's cop show, stock cars, GT sports, Formula X and Japanese. Although the racing is limited to fixed lanes that players switch between there are also road blocks, ramps, splits, loops, merges and a power ups.



Golf Navigator Vol. 1

Developer	Dual
Publisher	Spike
Release date	(jp) June 28, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 Player

The Golf Navigator game series feature panoramic 360 degree views of the courses and a system which allows for impartation of power and english to the virtual golfer's swing.

The Vol.1 features 2 courses: Caledonian Golf Club & Sohbu County Club. At the beginning of the game the players can choose between a male or a female caracter, select one of the courses and play stroke play, free play or view the course data.

Golf Navigator Vol. 2

Developer	Dual
Publisher	Spike
Release date	(jp) June 28, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 Player

Vol.2 features 2 courses: Kawagoe Country Club and Shizouka Country Hamaoka Course.

Kawagoe Country Club is a private golf course in Kawagoe, Saitama, Japan. It is the planned golf venue for the 2020 Summer Olympics.

Shizouka Country Hamaoka Course is laid out facing the Pacific Ocean and against a backdrop of hills. The Men's Professional Tournament was held at this location.

Golf Navigator Vol. 3

Developer	Dual
Publisher	Spike
Release date	(jp) September 6, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 Player

Vol.3 features 2 courses: Rope Club & Taiheiyo Sherwood.

Rope Club is a parkland course with long and spacious fairways. Varied bunkers, many of them are beach bunkers that are placed here and there.

Named to evoke an image of Robin Hood's Sherwood Forest, the Taiheiyo Associates Oarai Sherwood Course have the typical climate of the eastern seaboard of the island of Honshu.

Golf Navigator Vol. 4

Developer	Dual
Publisher	Spike
Release date	(jp) September 20, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 Player

Vol.4 features 2 courses: Taiheiyo Gotenba & Ishioka Golf Club.

Taiheiyo Gotenba feature fairway views of Mount Fuji, and was selected as the No.1 course in Japan by the country's leading golf magazine Par Golf.

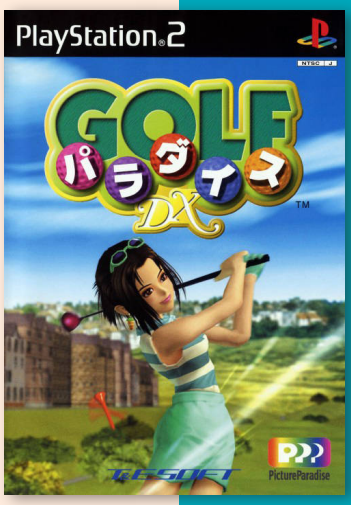
Ishioka Golf Club is located in Ogawa, Ibaraki, Japan. It was ranked No.15 in Japan's top 100 golf courses in 2006 by E-Golf.

J

Golf Paradise DX

J

Developer	T&E Soft
Publisher	T&E Soft
Release date	(jp) December 14, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-4 Players

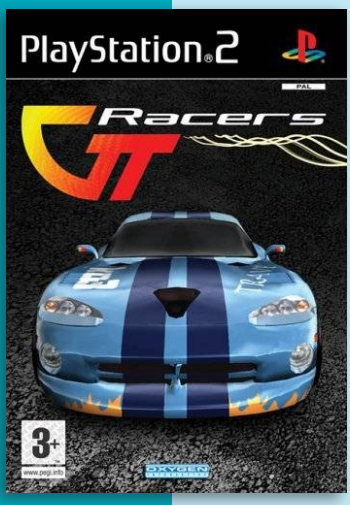


Golf Paradise DX is an enhanced version of Swing Away Golf. As with the original, the game is a cartoony take on golf, that plays similiar to the Hot Shots Golf series.

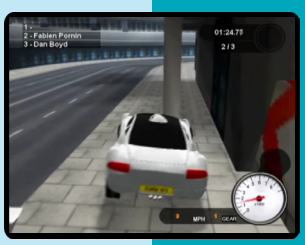
The game feature a 4 player match, where player-stake turns and finish with the best score, and a story mode, where players choose their character, distribute skill points and work their way from amateur to professional.

GT Racers

5.5



Developer	Aqua Pacific
Publisher	Oxygen Interactive
Release date	(eu) November 5, 2004
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players



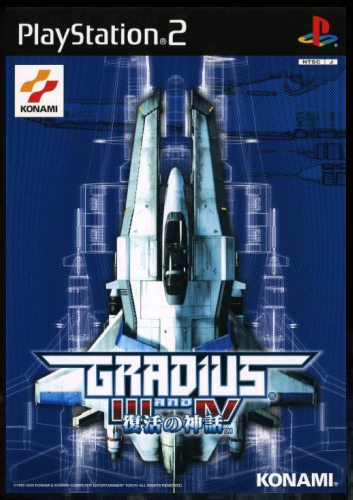
GT Racers is a simple racing game with two single player modes: quick race and championship with three modes; Bronze, Silver and Gold. Completing mode unlocks new cars. There are eleven cars altogether. They are based on real-life cars. Included are ten tracks in five city's: Berlin, London, Paris, Tokyo and New York City. Each locale has one day track and one night track.

"mobygames.com"

P

Gradius III and IV

6.4



JNP

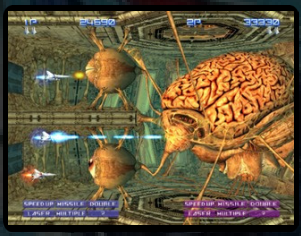
Developer	KCET
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) April 13, 2000
Genre	Shooter, Compilation
Mode	1-2 Players

This is a compilation containing two side scrolling shooters from Konami: Gradius III and Gradius IV. Both games are straight emulation of their arcade counterparts, though some additional features are also included (adjustable difficulty and speed, a stage select option, and some extra game modes). Also, a new 3D introduction movie was created to introduce the games.

Gradius III was first released in 1989 for the arcades in Japan. It is the third game in the Gradius series. The player returns as the role of the pilot of the Vic Viper starfighter to battle the onslaughts of the Bacterion Empire. There are a total of ten levels in the game, with stage 4 being something of a bonus level; here, the player controls the Vic Viper in a third-person perspective and must avoid colliding with walls. Though the level is completely devoid of any enemies, free floating power-ups are scattered throughout. There are also two hidden levels that are based on the early sections of Gradius and Salamander. The game contains the familiar weapons, level layouts, and enemies that have become trademarks of the series.

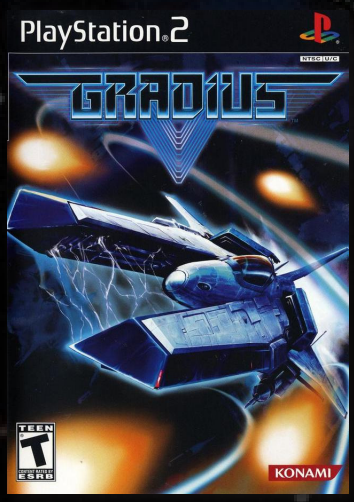
Gradius IV is the fourth arcade installment in the series. Although spinoffs had been released prior to it such as Gradius Gaiden. The core gameplay of Gradius IV remains relatively unchanged. However, changes were made on the weapons system in the transition from Gradius III. It featured several additions and removals to the vaulted weapons system. In this game there are a total of six configurations, the first four of which are migrated from Gradius II. The two new configurations are as follows: Configuration: The missile mode is a vertical mine that is released above and below the ship. After a short delay, the mines explode, yielding a large explosion. The double mode is the standard 45-degree angle split. The laser mode is a thin armor-piercing round that can penetrate multiple enemies. Configuration 6: The missile mode is the flying torpedo, which produces two missiles that fly forward in front of the ship. The double mode is the tailgun, seen in other configurations. The laser is the twin laser seen in Gradius III.

Gradius V



Developer	Treasure
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) July 22, 2004
Genre	Shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

8.2



JNP

Gradius V was largely developed under contract by Treasure, who had previously worked on Radiant Silvergun and Ikaruga. The game is set predominantly in outer space where players control the spacecraft called Vic Viper through a continuously scrolling background depicting the territories of Bacterian—an evil empire which serves as the player's enemy.

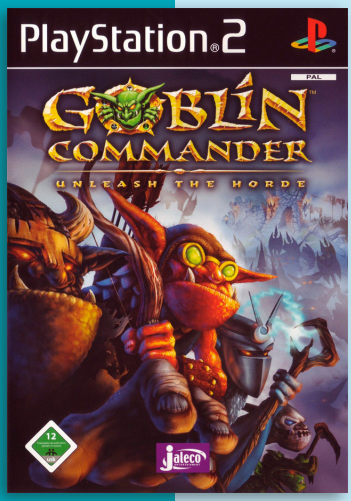
The game takes place as a 2D scrolling shooter with the Vic Viper contending with formations of enemies, both stationary and moving, that fire bullets. Players go through levels consisting of open space and others consisting of maneuvering through close quarters which alter between horizontal and vertical scrolling. In Gradius V, the hit box (the pixels which must be touched by an object to destroy the ship) has been reduced in size to allow players to get through small areas more easily. Gradius V marks the first time in the series in which players can reappear immediately and resume the game from where they lose a life ever since Salamander series. Alternatively, players may also restart at a previously cleared checkpoint depending on the game's settings.

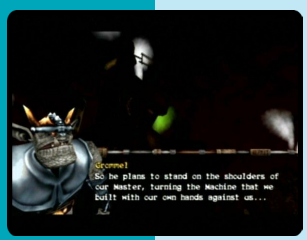
The game can be played with one player or with two players simultaneously. After players start the game, they will enter a "Select Weapon Array" screen, where they may select the types of power-ups they will use through the course of the game. There is also an unlockable feature called "Weapon Edit" in which players can access if certain conditions are met. In this mode, they can customize the Vic Viper with various combinations of weapons found in the "Select Weapon Array" screen, from earlier Gradius games, or new weaponry.

Throughout the game, players can accumulate various power-up capsules after destroying certain enemies or enemy formations. The types of power-ups that can be obtained throughout the course of the game are selected at the "Select Weapon Array" and "Weapon Edit" menus before starting. The cursor cycles through the following power-ups in order: "Speed Up", "Missile", "Double", "Laser", "Multiple", and "Shield".

6.8

Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde





Developer	Jaleco Entertainment
Publisher	Jaleco Entertainment
Release date	(us) November 11, 2003
Genre	Real-time strategy
Mode	1-2 Players

Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde is a 2003 real-time strategy video game released for the Xbox, PS2 and GameCube.

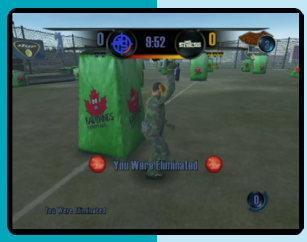
Set in a fantasy world, the story follows the tale of a civil war between goblin clans after their creator and master is killed.

Goblin Commander is a hybrid genre with much of the gameplay revolving around real-time strategy while incorporating elements of action gameplay. Players take control of a number from five different goblin clans, each with their own unique units and designs with the objective of harvesting resources to build up their horde and warring with the opposing player clans. Through a top-down perspective user interference, each player begins with one clan shrine for every goblin clan under their command and only one Hall of Titans, the former for recruiting and upgrading goblins and the latter for special "titan" units and turrets. The clan shrines are in a fixed location and if destroyed will have to be rebuilt. There are two kinds of resources to gather for purchases and upgrades: gold and souls. Gold is found throughout the map by locating treasure chests and destroying structures, both the terrain and foe's. Souls are harvested through either defeating enemy units or capturing souls wells. Additional structures are located elsewhere on the world map and must also be captured for use. These include the Observatory for a greater line of sight, revealing unexplored areas of the map and the Alchemist Shop for purchasing rune magic to be used for their own benefit or against other players.

There are five different goblin clans in total; Stonekrusher, Hellfire, Stormbringer, Plaguespitter and Nighthorde. Each clan focuses on either close combat or ranged orientated goblins, for example the Stonekrusher can recruit light, medium and heavy combat goblins but only just light range. They also have special goblins with their own ability such as the Hellfire scout for line of sight and the Stonekrusher drummer for healing other goblins.

Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball Max'd

7.0



Developer	Activision Value
Publisher	Activision Value
Release date	(us) September 26, 2006
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1-2 (10) Players

Greg Hastings Tournament Paintball MAX'D developed under joint venture with Paintball Players Productions, LLC. MAX'D is the sequel to Greg Hastings Tournament Paintball (2004 Xbox).

The game maintains most of the same control elements of the original game. (Players can shoot, reload, run, crouch, lay down, stand, and switch marker hands) In addition, it is now possible to press a button to give commands while on the field. New additions include ten more tournaments than the original, bringing the total to 29.

Two main features of the game that differ from its predecessors are the "breakout manager" and the "create a field". Now the user can set which bunkers and what shooting styles his or her teammates will exhibit on the break using a screen that is displayed before the action begins.

Grand Prix Challenge

7.6

Developer	Melbourne House
Publisher	Atari
Release date	(eu) November 22, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Grand Prix Challenge is a Formula One racing game by Australian developer Infogrames Melbourne House. It was was officially licensed by Formula One Administration.

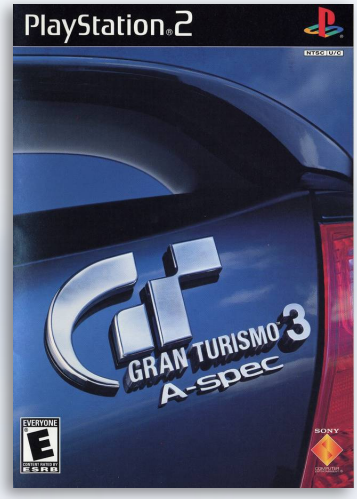
The game features all the drivers, cars and circuits from the 2002 Formula One season. Australian developer Torus Games also supplied the art for the Silverstone (UK), Magny-Cours (France) and Montreal (Canada) racing tracks. Cars in the game are made form around 17,000 polygons.

There are 4 levels of AI to compete against, variable weather conditions, fuel usage, tire wear, interactive pitstops and various car setups.

Modes include; Time Trial, Single Grand Prix (practice/qualifying/warm-up/race), Championship, Grand Prix Challenge and Multiplayer (2-player splitscreen).

9.5

Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec



J N P

Developer	Polyphony Digital
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(jp) April 28, 2001
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (6) Players

Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec is the first in the Gran Turismo series released for the PlayStation 2. During its demonstration at E3 2000 and E3 2001 the game's working title was Gran Turismo 2000.

The objective of the game is to win all the provided races, championships, complete license tests and achieve 100% game completion. Every 25% of the game completed results in the player being awarded a car as a special prize. For GT3, the Gran Turismo Mode (Simulation Mode in the North American version) has a reorganized layout, with a more structured and progressive arrangement of races and challenges. Races vary from short beginner events to multi-hour endurance races and also rallying events against an opponent. In addition, the car shops are now organized by country and then by manufacturer, which some find to be more intuitive than the East/West City method used in its predecessor.

The Arcade Mode is reorganized in "stages"; these stages are made up of 5 or 6 tracks pooled from all available tracks in the game, including both road and rally races. To get to the next stage, all tracks on a stage must be completed on Easy difficulty or higher. By beating the stage on Normal or Difficult, additional cars are unlocked as well for play in any mode of Arcade Mode (including two-player battle and time trial).

GT3 features 19 race courses, 14 of which have reverse variants' and 4 of which are dirt tracks. Most of these circuits are at fictional locations, but California's Laguna Seca Raceway and Côte d'Azur (which is heavily based on the Monaco Grand Prix circuit) are not.

Other changes include the omission of the ability to "race modify" or add downforce to production cars, removal of suspension damage, and the absence of torque limits for races.

New to the franchise, GT3 also contained unlicensed versions of six actual Formula One cars, labelled as F686/M, F687/S, F688/S, F090/S, F094/H and F094/S in the Japanese and American versions) that the player could win from endurance races. In the Japanese and American versions, the name of each car denotes various pieces of information (such as the amount of cylinders in the engine, the year the chassis was raced, and its driver, respectively). For example, the a forementioned F094/S was the 10-cylinder, 1994-season car driven by Ayrton Senna, whereas the F686/M represented the 6-cylinder, 1986-season car driven by Nigel Mansell. In the PAL release, however, there were only two F1 cars, not obviously based on any real-life counterparts and instead labelled as Polyphony 001 and 002 respectively.

GT3 also marks informal appearances of automakers Lamborghini and Porsche. A racing JGTC Lamborghini Diablo was featured in the NTSC-J version (where the car has been cut from NTSC-U copy and being available in NTSC-U copy with a cheat device), and a Porsche 911 GT3 can be found in the game code (though it cannot be obtained normally, and requires the use of a cheat device). Both cars,

together with two hidden Lancia Stratoses (road and rally versions), however, are completely absent in PAL version. Lamborghini would make its first official appearance in 2009's Gran Turismo (PSP), while Porsche made its first official appearance in Gran Turismo Sport for the PlayStation 4.

The developers collaborated with computer and game peripheral maker Logitech for the game, which resulted in the GT Force steering wheel. The wheel features force feedback and was designed specifically for GT3.

A demo copy of the game under the working title was issued in the PlayStation Festival 2000, allowing players to drive a Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution V in the Seattle Circuit for 120 seconds. The game was more or less a beta version of GT3 named Gran Turismo 2000, that was renamed to GT3 A-Spec due to the fact the game was taking longer to make than planned.

Compared to Gran Turismo 2, the graphics are greatly improved thanks to the PlayStation 2 hardware system but the number of cars has been drastically reduced in this game due to large work onto graphics, cars structure, detailed statistics of all the cars and the game's release being early in the PlayStation 2's lifespan. About 180 cars are featured in this game, rather than 650 in GT2.

A giveaway was launched at the release of the game included various prizes in North America for example, there was a day at the Skip Barber Racing School, car payments for a month and Gran Turismo themed shirt and hat up for giveaway.

Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec was met with critical acclaim from game critics. It received an aggregated score of 94.54% on GameRankings and 95/100 on Metacritic, placing it among the top 50 of all games on the multi-platform site and in the top 10 of PlayStation 2 titles. It has appeared on some 'Top 100 Games' lists such as that by IGN in 2003. In 2004, readers of Retro Gamer voted Gran Turismo 2 97th top retro gamer, with the staff noting that *"the mix of realistic handling and superb graphics, not to mention the fact that it features 100s of licensed vehicles, has won it the admiration of car lovers everywhere. The gameplay may be a little too deep and difficult for many, but for its core followers, Gran Turismo is the be all and end all of digital racing, and GT3 has been voted as the best of the bunch."*

As of April 30, 2008, the game has shipped 1.89 million copies in Japan, 7.14 million in North America, 5.85 million in Europe, and 10,000 in Southeast Asia, for a total of 14.89 million copies. It is the highest-selling game in the Gran Turismo franchise. It is a part of the PlayStation 2's Greatest Hits. It ranked fifteenth in the list of best-selling unbundled console games of all time, just below Wii Fit Plus.

Gran Turismo Concept

Gran Turismo Concept is part of the Gran Turismo series. The games was developed by Polyphony Digital and released in 2002 in Japan, Southeast Asia, Korea, and Europe. The games was not released in the North American market, although a stripped-down version of it was released in form of Gran Turismo: Nissan 350Z Edition.

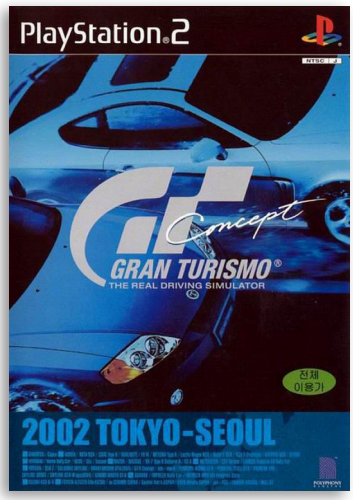
This short version title followed the release of the full-length version Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec in 2001 and was eventually followed by Gran Turismo 4.

2001 Tokyo

7.9

Release date January 1, 2002

The 2001 Tokyo version features Tokyo Motor Show 2001 concept cars including the Nissan GT-R Concept '01, for a total of 51 cars. The game also comes with a 64 page manual, featuring images of the available cars. It was released in Japan and Southeast Asia on January 1, 2002. As of April 2008, Gran Turismo Concept 2001 Tokyo has shipped 430,000 copies in Japan and 10,000 in Southeast Asia.



2002 Tokyo-Seoul

6.7

Release date (ko) May 16, 2002

A second version, 2002 Tokyo-Seoul, was released in South Korea on May 16, 2002, to celebrate the PlayStation 2 official launch in this country. It featured cars from the 2001 Tokyo version plus additional models unveiled at the Seoul Motor Show. This game introduced South Korean automakers, like Hyundai, in the Gran Turismo series. As of April 2008, Gran Turismo Concept 2002 Tokyo-Seoul has shipped 90,000 copies in South Korea.

2002 Tokyo-Geneva

7.1

Release date (eu) July 19, 2002

A last version, 2002 Tokyo-Geneva, was released in Europe on July 17, 2002. It featured all the cars from the 2002 Tokyo-Seoul version plus new models unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show including the Volkswagen W12. A Chinese/English NTSC version was released in the Southeast Asia on July 25, 2002, it adds 30 cars to the 2001 Tokyo version released earlier in this area. As of April 2008, Gran Turismo Concept 2002 Tokyo-Geneva has shipped 1 million copies in Europe and 30,000 in Southeast Asia. 2002 Tokyo-Geneva is the definitive version of GT Concept, as it has the most cars, including the Ford GT40 LM Edition.

GT Concept
GRAN TURISMO®
THE REAL DRIVING SIMULATOR
2002 TOKYO-GENEVA

PlayStation.2
THE THIRD PLACE™

Take your mind for a spin.

GT Concept, from the developers of the Gran Turismo series, puts you in the driving seat of over 100 high-performance vehicles - including concept cars, rally cars and fantasy racers. You'll be able to get behind the wheel of super-tuned concept cars from Japan, Korea, Europe and the USA in this ready-to-run arcade racer.

Plus you've got five superb circuits all over the globe to choose from, including the Swiss Alps and the Tokyo R246, giving you plenty of track to test your skill. Live the life of a racing test driver with this unique arcade challenge, at the streamlined price of only $69.95 RRP. GT Concept. Jump in. Floor it. Spin out. www.au.playstation.com/gtconcept

POLYPHONY DIGITAL

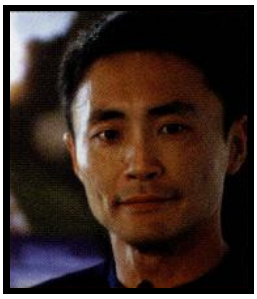
'PS' and 'PlayStation' are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Gran Turismo® Concept © 2002 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All manufacturers, cars, brands and associated imagery featured in this game are trademarks and/or copyrighted materials of their respective owners. All rights reserved. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by Polyphony Digital Inc. "The Third Place" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe.

WLTBWA KSP55392

AN AUDIENCE WITH KAZUNORI YAMAUCHI

by: Tim Rogers@Play (NZ) 2004 #07

play™'S ERSTWHILE JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT, TIM ROGERS, MEETS UP WITH THE MAN BEHIND THE GAME



I have this tactic when I talk to a game producer. When someone comes in and tells us we're running overtime and to ask one more question and be done with it, I always ask the producer, "What is your dream?" He then talks for an hour and a half. Hideo Kojima, producer of *Metal Gear Solid*, talked about how he wants to go to space, build a robot of a little girl, and film an independent love story with a simple moral. I didn't ask Polyphony Digital's Kazunori Yamauchi what his dream was, because by the time our review was over, I had realised that he didn't need one.

At the Tokyo Game Show, Yamauchi revealed that, *Gran Turismo 4* will be coming out early 2005 in the UK. He debuted the new Photo mode and the B-Spec mode without the aid of note cars. In a 500-square-metre ballroom full of men in suits and women and women in odd flight attendant outfits, Yamauchi, the man of the (two) (long) hour(s), stood in a red Nike running shirt and a pair of black track pants. Afterward, we talked about *Gran Turismo 4*... and other things.

How did Kazunori Yamuauchi get into videogames? He seems like such a... normal guy.

"I used to play a lot of games. Computer games, mostly. I never got into the Famicom stuff. The best game I ever played was *Choplifter* for the Commodore 64." By 'best game', it seems he means that it was the one that pushed him to make games. "In the beginning it was just a hobby. I made games about, well, moving objects, and accomplishing goals." Here, he laughs.

We get on the subject of how we started making games professionally. Like he said, it was a hobby at first. Then, he started to get more and more proficient with programming in general, and this game him the idea that he might as well make it a career. He developed a physics engine "kind of by accident", and decided to make a PlayStation game out of it. This was in 1994, when Sony Computer Entertainment Japan was in the midst of their great search for a PlayStation mascot. With the help of some artists adept at making sellable characters, Yamauchi produced *Motor Toon Grand Prix*, which sold well enough to spawn a sequel (which was a hit in Europe and the US) and earn Yamauchi a permanent position of sorts at Sony Computer Entertainment Japan.

"Everybody employed as a game designer at Sony Computer Entertainment Japan, back then, had to write a new game idea-suggestion once a day. It was a big responsibility. You write one a day, seven a week, thirty-one a month. Every employee in game design has to do this. If the president likes the idea, he summons you. The form for writing down the ideas has a lot of blanks. What will the gameplay be like? What will the graphical style be like? What kind of music are we looking at? Why would people want to play it? All that stuff."

When did Kazunori Yamauchi get the idead for *Gran Turismo*?

"My first day at the job. I took one of those forms and wrote, 'I want to drive my own car on my television."

And that got him a meeting with the president of the company?

"Yep."

And since then, *Gran Turismo* has been his life?

"For the most part, yeah."

So, I ask him, at the time you wrote 'my car', what car were we talking about?

Yamauchi points an index finger at me, and smiles. "That's the interesting part. I didn't have a car."

Now he has hundreds of them. Once American, European and Japanese car magazines alike caught wind of how beautifully and lovingly *Gran Turismo* was pieced together, they wrote features on it, and forced waves of millions of non-gamers to buy PlayStation consoles and DualShock controllers. Shortly after the game's popularity sank in, begging phone calls came from car manufacturers who had refused to let their cars appear in 'a videogame'. Sony, incidentally, stopped looking for a cute cartoon mascot. Yamauchi opened a bigger studio in Tokyo's spacious Kotu-ku, where he can test-drive all the cars he wants.

"Since then," he says, "he

can work on his game as long as he wants, and people don't complain because they know what's coming."

At this point in our interview, Yamauchi has already driven me down a ten-minute detour into my tastes in music, cars and videogames and suggested I get treated for my ear infection. I figure, so it's time for me to jump out and accuse him - "You say your game is for either 'casual car fans' or 'hardcore Gran Turismo fans'; what about games for, you know, fans of games?"

Yamauchi laughs, "Well, not everyone's a gaming fan".

What about him, though? Didn't he get into videogames because he liked videogames? Does he still play videogames?

"I only play *Gran Turismo 3*. I have a thirty-two inch television and the Logitech steering wheel."

How often does he play *Gran Turismo*?

"Pretty much every day." He goes home and runs a sixty-lap race in his custom Honda S-2000.

I am, quite honestly, shocked at this. Here, a videogame designer and self-proclaimed videogamer has told me that his videogame is not for videogamers, yet he plays a two-hour race of his own videogame every day. This man is clearly brilliant at something. The goal of *Gran Turismo* is simple, he tells me; to make a simulator of staggering depth with beautiful enough graphics to attract anyone's attention. The game is tenaciously programmed, therefore the fans know never to expect disappointment. The man commands respect from low-level employees because he is making something that is simultaneously a videogame, a use

ful piece of simulation software, and damned pretty to anyone who's ever seen a car.

I save what I thought was my best question for last: Now there are all these racing games like *OutRun 2* on Xbox with its free-flowing, easy-going feel, or *F-Zero GX* on GameCube with its impossible speeds, or *Burnout 3*, with its, well, crashing. Racing games that are fun and videogamey, with mass appeal. Do you ever think you might make a game like this?
I was expecting a long answer. I only had to expect that answer for half a second before Kazunori Yamauchi grinned and shot me his reply.

"Not for a second."

I don't have to ask this guy about his dreams, I realise. He's living his life like a long drive on a highway in his favourite car. I am filled with respect.

7.1

Gran Turismo 4 Prologue

J P

Developer	Polyphony Digital
Publisher	SCEI, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(jp) December 4, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

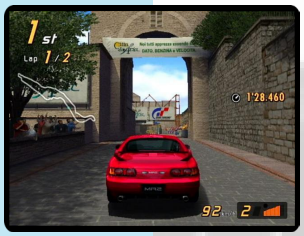
This short version title preceded the release of the full-length version Gran Turismo 4 in 2004.

In Japan a limited "Signature Edition" featuring the signature of the series producer Kazunori Yamauchi on the front cover package preceded the release of the regular edition. The regular edition was also bundled with a white ceramic PlayStation 2 console in a Christmas limited SKU called "PlayStation Racing Pack". In Europe, the game was bundled with a promotional "Making of DVD Video". While intended to be a limited content, the DVD-Video was also included in the Platinum re-release. The DVD was later included in the limited Gran Turismo 4 "Special DVD Set" released in Japan. As GT4 was intended to be released in time for the worldwide 2002/2003 Christmas release but was delayed, in consolation, Polyphony brought out GT4: Prologue as a sneak preview (including a documentary bonus disc in Europe) to the full experience of GT4.

Though it was necessary to limit the number of cars and courses included, this product still included some of the main features of the Gran Turismo franchise such as races, time attack and license tests. The sneak preview also expressed the latest technology Polyphony Digital had accumulated over the past two years. Featuring 50 of GT4's then planned 500 cars as well as five courses, this expanded demo was designed as a stop-gap until the complete version was released.

The game includes a Driving School (License Tests) as well as early version of some circuits, like the New York track which was modified in the full version. A new Gran Turismo official steering wheel, the Driving Force Pro known as GT Force Pro in Japan and supporting force feedback, was released by Logitech (Logicool in Japan) to coincide with the Gran Turismo 4 Prologue launch date. The European version came with an extra car not included in the Japanese version; the BMW Concept M5.

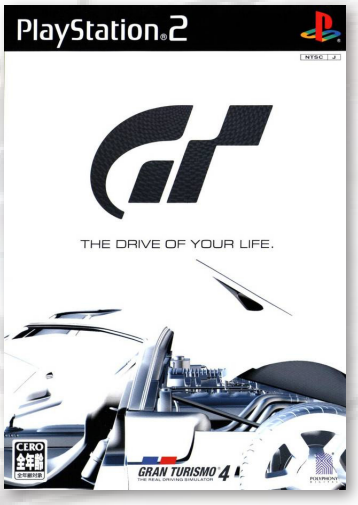
Gran Turismo 4 Prologue has sold 1.4 million copies since its release.



8.9

Gran Turismo 4

Developer	Polyphony Digital
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(jp) December 28, 2004
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (6) Players



Gran Turismo 4 is the fourth and final installment in the Gran Turismo series for the PlayStation 2.

Players now accumulate points by winning races in the normal first-person driving mode, called A-Spec mode. Each race event can yield up to a maximum of 200 A-Spec points. Generally, a win using a car with less of an advantage over the AI opponents is worth more points. Points can only be won once, so to win further points from a previously-won event, it must be re-won using a car with less of an advantage over the AI. There are also the 34 Missions which can yield 250 points each. Despite this, A-Spec points are experience points, not money.

The new B-Spec mode puts players in the place of a racing crew chief: telling the driver how aggressively to drive, when to pass, and mandating pit stops (by monitoring tire wear and fuel level). The speed of the time in the race can be increased up to 3x, allowing for Endurance races to be completed in less time than would take in A-Spec mode. The 3x feature, however, must be turned on after every pit stop because it resets to normal time. The game manual says that the player may speed up B-Spec mode by up to 5x, but this is believed to be a typo. B-Spec points are given out for each race completed in B-Spec mode. This increases the skill level of the AI driver in the categories of vehicle skill, course skill, and battle skill. Players can thereby use B-Spec mode in harder races as the game progresses, but this mode cannot be used on wet, dirt and snow courses.

Another new addition to the game is the Driving Missions, which are similar in experience to the license tests, but award successful completion with 250 A-Spec points and 1000 or more credits. Each mission takes place with a given car on a given track or section of track, and a given set of opponents. There are 4 sets of missions: The Pass, in which the driver must overtake an opponent within a certain distance; 3 Lap Battle, in which the driver must pass 5 opponents over the course of 3 laps; Slipstream Battle, in which the driver must overtake identical opponents by way of drafting; and 1 Lap Magic, in which the driver starts with a significant time penalty against much slower opponents and must overtake them all in the space of a single lap. Completing each set of missions earns the player a prize car. There are a total of 5 prize cars available to be won, they are the DeLorean DMC-12, Jay Leno Tank Car, Pagani Zonda Race Car, Toyota 7, and the Nissan R89C.

A new Photo Mode is included in the game, which allows the player to control a virtual camera, taking pictures of their cars on the track or at specific locations, including the Grand Canyon. This game is able to produce a selection of screenshots with variable compression rate (Normal/Fine/SuperFine) and size (up to 1280x960 72dpi), and the user can choose to save or print to a supported USB device.

J N P

Compared with Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec, graphics are greatly improved with more detail on cars and tracks (despite running on the same PlayStation 2 hardware). The physics are also greatly improved, with the major upgrade that cars now experience body movement, such as pitching (forwards and backwards rolling) under braking. Barriers have considerably more friction to slow down the cars in GT4 (in an attempt to stop the use of "wall riding"), but there is minimal friction between cars, so the advantage obtained by running into the side of another car (instead of braking) is still present. Each of the Driving Missions and Special Conditions events give a 5-second penalty for hitting the walls or opponents' cars in this way, where the car's speed is restricted to 50 km/h (31 mph) until the timer disappears when it reaches zero.

GT4 supports Dolby Digital surround, 480p/1080i (NTSC only) and widescreen modes, but 1080i is only supported in single player races. Despite the lack of online gameplay, GT4 does support use of the PlayStation 2 Network Adapter, which can be used to communicate with additional PS2s to create a multi-screen setup. In addition, the Network Adapter can be used to play games on a local subnet for up to six players, though player customized cars cannot be used in a LAN game. Support for the Logitech Driving Force Pro and GT Force steering wheels is continued from Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec. Other "PC" steering wheels previously (and unofficially) supported in GT3 were explicitly disabled for GT4. New support is given for USB storage and print devices used in Photo Mode.

GT4 continues in its predecessors' footsteps by offering an extremely large list of cars; the PAL version, for example, features 721 cars from 80 manufacturers. There are differences in the car lists between the different GT4 regional versions, and some cars have different names, e.g. the JDM Toyota Vitz is known as the Toyota Yaris in places such as Europe and Puerto Rico and the second generation Mazda Demio is known as the Mazda 2 in the same places (PAL version only). A non-Japanese example is the Opel Speedster which was sold in the United Kingdom as the Vauxhall VX220. The Nissan Z-car is known as the Nissan Fairlady Z in the NTSC-J version. As was the case with its predecessors, several well-known sports car manufacturers such as Porsche, Ferrari, and Lamborghini do not appear in the game. RUF, a company that produces cars based on Porsche chassis, but is classed as a manufacturer in its own right, reprised this role for GT4.

Some of the cars in the game are multiple variations on a single base model; there are 20 different Subaru Imprezas and Legacies, 25 Mitsubishi Lancer/Lancer Evolutions, and 48 Nissan Skylines, including the Nissan GT-R Concept. One vehicle, another Skyline, is the pace car from the "Guide Lap" licence tests and is also a prize car. There is also the GT Edition, which was the pace car without the pace car lights, and even more power (541 horsepower, the standard version packs 276). Each vehicle model has over 5000 polygons.

Car prices range from about 2500 credits for basic 1980s Japanese used cars up to 4.5 million (450,000,000 in the Japanese version) credits for the top end (mostly Le Mans) race cars. Some special prize-only cars (such as the Pagani Zonda LM Race Car '01) are not visible in the vehicle showrooms, and a few do not have corresponding dealerships, and thus are unmodifiable, for example, the Formula Gran Turismo (Formula 1 car). Also, some concept cars featured in the game

ended up becoming mass production cars, such as the Suzuki Swift.

GT4 is responsible for a few vehicle firsts in the Gran Turismo series. It is the first to feature pickup trucks, such as the Toyota Tacoma and Dodge Ram. It is the first game in the series to feature the DeLorean, using the stage II spec engine (developed in 2004, hence the 2004 designation). It is also the first in the series to feature a diesel-powered car, the BMW 120d. A special edition of GT4 featuring the 120d (and the rest of the 1 Series line), and three tracks were provided to BMW customers who purchased their 1 Series automobile before the release of GT4. While Gran Turismo 2 did have a one-off F1 engine version of the Renault Espace, GT4 was the first of the series to feature a production minivan, the Honda Odyssey (JDM version). A first-generation Mitsubishi Pajero Paris-Dakar rally car, a winner of the 1985 rally, makes an appearance as the first SUV in racing trim. It was also the first in the series to feature D1 Grand Prix tuned cars such as Ken Nomura's Blitz ER34 D1GP.

The game includes some prize cars of historical interest, such as vehicles from as far back as 1886 at the dawn of the automobile. A special car called the Auto Union V16 Type C Streamline, built in 1937, can only be used in Power and Speed (which tests the performance of vehicles) or a test drive in Nürburgring, but has around 542 HP. Even some modern cars with complex body shapes cannot be raced against opponents, such as the Caterham Seven Fireblade. In Arcade Mode, these cars can be raced against a single opponent; this is the case for any convertible with the top down.

There is also a special car which is specially tuned and returns from the previous game, called the 'Shuichi Shigeno' version of Toyota AE86, which is taken from Initial D, and is licensed by Toyota, although Toyota has never used the name of the author of Initial D. Another Initial D car, the Sileighty, makes another returning appearance. Comedian Jay Leno, an avid car collector, is listed in the game as a manufacturer; one of his custom cars, the Blastolene Special or "Tank Car", is included in the game as a prize car, available after beating missions 11-20. The 2022 Nike ONE has Morse code on both sides of the car. They read "www.phil-frank.com", the website of the artist commissioned to design this car for GT4, and "PFD", the initials of the artist's company. There is also Morse code visible on the inside of all four tires that read "PFD" when mirrored.

GT4 retains all the familiar tuning parameters from the previous games in the series, but also allows weight to be added to the car. This can be positioned to affect handling or used as a form of handicapping. Another new vehicle tuning addition is nitrous oxide injection. Also, GT Auto can now install a rear wing on some cars, making it possible to adjust the car's rear downforce, which was previously only possible on racing cars or, on the first two games in the series, cars with the racing modification performed.

The game features 51 tracks, which are divided into 4 groups: World Circuits, Original Circuits, City Courses, and Dirt &

Snow. Many of the tracks are new or modified versions of old Gran Turismo favorites. Notable real-world track inclusions are the longest circuit Nürburgring Nordschleife, Suzuka Circuit, Twin Ring Motegi (with three Road Course configurations, as well as the Super Speedway) and Circuit de la Sarthe (Le Mans). There are also tracks modelled after world-famous attractions such as New York City's Times Square, Hong Kong, Hôtel George-V Paris, and the Las Vegas Strip. The Hong Kong course is located in the Tsim Sha Tsui district, which, in its clockwise configuration, starts at Salisbury Road, passes through the city's waterfront and then Nathan Road.

The Città d'Aria course follows actual roads in Assisi, Italy. The race starts/finishes in the piazza in front of the temple Minerva. Just before the start/finish line on this course, written on the tarmac is an inscription in broken Italian: "Dio lo benedice — fate il suo guidare il più sicuro e divertirsi", which, when translated, means "God blesses him; make his driving the most safely and to have fun." On the Seattle circuit, the Kingdome, the previous home of the Seattle Mariners, is visible next to their current stadium, Safeco Field. Kingdome was demolished in an implosion on March 26, 2000. Because the Seattle circuit was created for GT2 in 1999, before the Kingdome's demolition, it has been left unchanged and the Mariners' now completed home, Safeco Field, remains under construction, not to be completed until 2002. (GT4 reuses the Seattle map from GT3), A section of the Opera Paris course passing through Place de la Concorde was traversed by Claude Lelouch in the short film C'etait un rendez-vous.

There are no changes in weather or time conditions during races. Even during the 24-hour endurance races, there is no transition from day to night or between different types of weather. All of the tracks are run in dry weather, with the exception of the Tsukuba Wet Race.

Gran Turismo 4 was generally praised by game critics. It received an aggregated score of 89.53% on GameRankings and 89/100 on Metacritic.

Jeremy Clarkson, a misshapen brit and the host of the Top Gear television program, performed a head-to-head test of real life versus GT4 on an episode of the program. He ran Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in real life and used an Acura NSX for a lap time of 1:57. But in the game he used a Honda NSX-R (which is lighter) with a lap time of 1:41:148. Clarkson also had to be shown by a race driving instructor where the line was between the game and reality. He pointed out that adjusting one's braking mid-turn in a real car could cause loss of control, and also mentioned that in the game, he is compelled to take bigger risks than he would in real life, and that in the game, the car did not suffer from brake fade. Despite the apparent discrepancies, in a column for The Sunday Times, Clarkson gave the game a score of three stars out of five and had this to say about it:

"I called Sony and asked it to send me a game chip already loaded with the 700 computer cars. And I am in a position to test out its claims because, unlike most people, I really have driven almost all of them in real life. There are mistakes. The BMW M3 CSL, for instance, brakes much better on the road than it does on the screen. And there's no way a Peugeot 106 could outdrag a Fiat Punto off the line. But other than this, I'm struggling: they've even managed to accurately reflect the differences between a Mercedes SL 600 and the Mercedes SL 55, which is hard enough to do in real life. There's more, too. If you take a banked curve in the Bentley Le Mans car flat out, you'll be fine. If you back off, even a little bit, you lose the aerodynamic

grip and end up spinning. That's how it is. This game would only be more real if a big spike shot out of the screen and skewered your head every time you crashed. In fact that's the only real drawback: that you can hit the barriers hard without ever damaging you or your car. Maybe they're saving that for GT5. Perhaps it'll be called Death or Glory."

Karl Brauer of edmunds.com performed a similar test, also at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, in which he and two others — professional race driver A. J. Allmendinger, and IGN gaming editor Justin Kaehler — set times in GT4 and real life in a variety of cars. Brauer's best time in a Ford GT in the game was 1:38, and his best time on the real track was 1:52. In the four vehicles the trio tested, none was able to duplicate his game times on the real track. Brauer suggested the main differences between the game and reality:

"Which brings up the single biggest difference between reality and virtual reality — consequences. A mistake on Gran Turismo 4 costs me nothing more than a bad lap time. A mistake with a real exotic car on a real racetrack is... a bit more costly. The other major difference between virtual racing and the real thing is feedback from the car — or an almost total lack thereof. Yes, the force feedback steering wheel does its best to let you know when you're veering off the track, or sliding the rear end, but none of this comes close to the kind of information you get while driving a real vehicle. And in a car like the Ford GT, that's vital information."

Many reviewers criticized the game for its continued lack of rendered damage. Instead of actual damage, the cars (depending on the speed and angle in which the collision occurred) simply bounce or spin off of the car, wall, or obstacle.

Reviewers complained of the continued ability to take unrealistic short cuts, such as the ones on Fuji Speedway 90's, Driving Park Beginner Course and Circuit de la Sarthe I, where the driver can cut right across the chicane, allowing a player to win by cheating. One reviewer also complained that the game's vehicles do not have enough grip. The game has also been criticized for lack of online play which had been promised during early development, but was announced as being removed at the time of release. Many reviewers expressed disappointment in the game's AI system, noting that *"virtual racers will follow their (driving) line with little concern for where the human driver is at any one time."* This is more evident during rally races and missions in which a 5-second speed penalty is given for hitting the other cars or the barriers, regardless of who initiated the contact. Some critics found B-Spec mode to offer little to the overall experience.

Non video-game publications made some positive reception too. Sean Cunningham of Maxim gave the game a perfect ten and asked, *"Is GT4 more fetish than game? Probably. But if this is a fetish, then put a leather hood on us and whip us till we bleed!"* Jason Hill of The Sydney Morning Herald gave it all five stars and stated that the game's biggest strength *"is the realistic handling. You feel every nuance of the car's movements, weight shifts and suspension, particularly with a Driving Force Pro steering wheel. This is a peerless driving simulation that will test even professional drivers."*

By March 2016, GT4 had shipped 1.27 million copies in Japan, 3.47 million in North America, 6.83 million in Europe, and 180,000 in Asia for a total of 11.76 million copies. It is the second highest-selling game in the franchise ahead of Gran Turismo but behind GT3 respectively.

Gran Turismo 4: Online Public Beta

Developer	Polyphony Digital
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) June 1, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

Gran Turismo 4 Online test version is a limited edition of GT4 featuring extra online services that were removed from the standard game due to some issues and a lack of time as the game had been delayed several times. Selecting the extra “Online” mode leads to the “Online Home” that features additional game modes, “Quick Race”, “Tuned Car Race”, “Private Race” (that requires a password) and “Time Attack”. “News” inform about the availability for the online courses or special events, with limited date and time. Public online services ended on September 1, 2006.

This public beta for GT4 Online (GT4OL) was freely shipped to 4,700 selected “GranTurismo.com” members from Japan and 300 from South Korea to collaborate as “test players”. Online services lasted three months from June 1 to September 1, 2006 and included 6-player “Competition”, Time Trial, chat (mail message and microphone communication), and an Internet ranking chart was available in the game’s website. (A version of the game intended for the United States market has since been discovered)

This test was not intended to precede a Gran Turismo 4 Online full scale release but instead to be used as a way to develop and test online features and structures for the upcoming GT5 on the PS3. Besides the 5,000 test players, seven special guests were invited to test GT4 Online. First, a special event named “Top Racer Battle” was staged in the Polyphony Digital headquarters on August 17. Six drivers from the JGTC Japanese championship entered the game’s online multiplayer “Competition” mode.

Motoyama won the test round, a 5-lap Fuji Speedway 2005 race with the drivers’ respective JGTC GT500 cars. The actual Top Racer Battle though, a 10-lap Tsukuba Circuit one make race on board a Mazda Roadster 1600 NR-A ‘04, was won by Ryo Michigami. Later from August 25 to September 5, 2006, Kazunori Yamauchi the Gran Turismo series producer (re)invited two Japanese and two European professional racing drivers sponsored by PlayStation to enter GT4OL’s Time Attack mode Internet ranking chart and, either to challenge him or another guest in a versus race, either to compete with five test drivers in a 8~10 rounds multiplayer online competition called “trophy”.

Gran Turismo 4: Nike Limited Edition

J N P

Developer	Polyphony Digital
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE
Release date	(jp) December 28, 2004
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (6) Players

The package contains a copy of Gran Turismo 4, a NIKE T-Shirt as well as NIKE shoes (four different sizes available) and a guide book packed together into an aluminum limited edition case.

The limited edition set - which costs significantly more than a PS2 console - was actually genuinely limited in availability, unlike most such sets; only 1000 was manufactured, 250 each of four different shoe sizes.

When playing GT4 while having an EyeToy camera connected as well as wearing the supplied T-Shirt, a special NIKE car will become available in the game.

The Nike ONE 2022 is a hypothetical vehicle designed by Phil Frank of Nike in association with Polyphony Digital. It only appears in Gran Turismo 4.

It resembles a "Sci-Fi" buggy, capable of a 230 mph (370 km/h) top speed and equipped with a eight-gear automatic transmission. However the top speed of 230 mph can only be obtained by drivers at their physical peak; this information is obtained by use of a wearable generator suit.

In the game, the Nike ONE is only capable of a 160 mph (260 km/h) top speed. The fuel bar is also not shown when driving this vehicle.

The shoes included with the limited edition GT package were originally envisioned by Gran Turismo producer Kazunori Yamauchi. Apparently, Yamauchi was given multiple chances to visit the Nike headquarters and he offered up his idea for a pair of Driving Shoes.

The shoes in their Japanese form are black and white, with the American version set to be black and red and the European version black and blue.

DMA to Become a Repeat Offender?

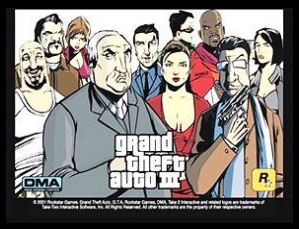
by: PSM Spetember 2000 #4

Whether you like playing on the other side of the law or not, DMA Design's *Grand Theft Auto* is a bona fide best-seller the world over. Having already spawned one sequel, indications are that the series will soon gain a new installment for PlayStation 2.

Details are still sketchy, but rumor has it that the working title for the game is GTA3D, thus implying a *Driver*-style fully-realized city setting for the game. And since it's being deployed with PS2 in mind, it's same to assume that the level of realism (traffic levels, pedestrian traffic, physics, and effects) in the game world can (and hopefully will) be closer to life than ever before.

Neither DMA nor US rights holder Rockstar have officially confirmed that the game is in development, but we'll keep your abreast of any new developments as they surface.

Grand Theft Auto became a hit for letting gamers explore the other side of the law, and now there's a chance that a fully 3D sequel will grace PS2.



Grand Theft Auto III

Developer	DMA Design
Publisher	Rockstar Games, (jp) Capcom
Release date	(us) October 22, 2001
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Grand Theft Auto III is an action-adventure developed by DMA Design. It is the fifth title in the Grand Theft Auto series, and the first main entry since 1999's Grand Theft Auto 2. Set within the fictional Liberty City, based on New York City, the game follows Claude after he is left for dead and quickly becomes entangled in a world of gangs, crime and corruption.

Grand Theft Auto III is an action-adventure played from a third-person view. Players complete missions—linear scenarios with set objectives—to progress through the story. It is possible to have several active missions running at one time, as some missions require players to wait for further instructions or events. Outside of missions, players can freely roam the game's open world, and have the ability to complete optional side missions. Liberty City is composed of three boroughs: Portland, Staunton Island, and Shoreside Vale; the islands are unlocked to players as the story progresses.

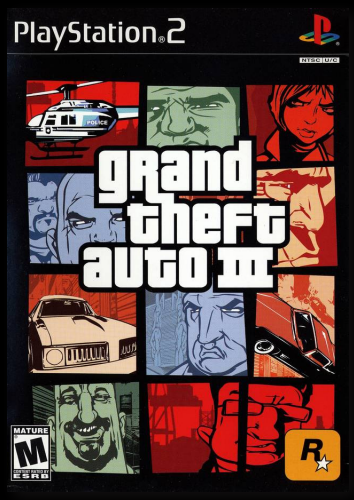
Players may run, jump or use vehicles to navigate the game's world. In combat, auto-aim can be used as assistance against enemies. Should players take damage, their health meter can be fully regenerated through the use of health pick-ups. Body armour can be used to absorb gunshots and explosive damage, but is used up in the process. When health is entirely depleted, gameplay stops, and players respawn at the nearest hospital, at the expense of losing armour and an amount of money.

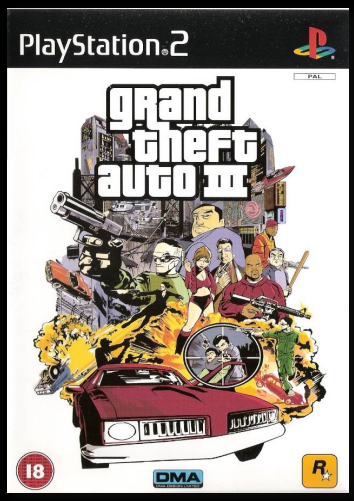
If players commit crimes while playing, the game's law enforcement agencies may respond as indicated by a "wanted" meter in the HUD. On the meter, the displayed stars indicate the current wanted level (for example, at the maximum six-star level, efforts by law enforcement to incapacitate players become very aggressive). Law enforcement officers will search for players who leave the wanted vicinity. The wanted meter enters a cooldown mode and eventually recedes when players are hidden from the officers' line of sight.

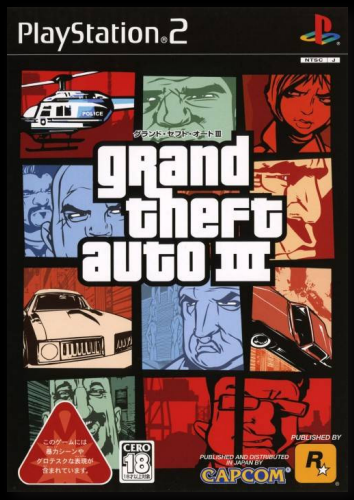
The game lets players control the mute criminal Claude. During the story, Claude meets various new characters from gangs. As players completes missions for different gangs, fellow gang members will often defend players, while rival gang members will recognise players and subsequently shoot on sight. While free roaming the game world, players may engage in activities such as a vigilante minigame, a fire fighting activity, a paramedic service and a taxi cab service. Completion of these activities grants players with context-specific rewards; for example, completing the vigilante mission allows players to bribe police after committing a crime.

Players use melee attacks, firearms and explosives to fight enemies. The firearms include weapons such as the Micro Uzi, an M16 rifle and a flamethrower. The game's three-dimension environment allows a first-person view while aiming with the sniper rifle,

9.7







J N P

rocket launcher and the M16 rifle. In addition, the game's combat was reworked to allow players to commit drive-by shootings by facing sideways in a vehicle. The game gives players a wide variety of weapon options—they can be purchased from local firearms dealers, found on the ground, retrieved from dead enemies, or found around the city.

The core development team of Grand Theft Auto III consisted of about 23 people at DMA Design in Edinburgh, who worked closely with publisher Rockstar Games in New York City. By early 2001, the team had designed the city, cars, and some weapons. An online multiplayer mode was initially planned for the game, but was ultimately dropped due to time and resource limitations. Producer Leslie Benzies described Grand Theft Auto III as a *"crime simulation game"*. When porting the game to Microsoft Windows, the team delayed it from the PlayStation 2 release in order to ensure quality, citing issues with the simultaneous platform release of previous Grand Theft Auto games.

Grand Theft Auto III is considered to be the first 3D game in the series, using Criterion Games' RenderWare game engine. When designing the game, the development team expanded upon concepts introduced in the previous Grand Theft Auto games. Benzies stated that the intention was to recreate the *"freedom and diversity"* of the previous games in a *"living, breathing 3D world"*, using the power of the PlayStation 2 to do so. The console's ability to use DVDs, an improvement over the PlayStation's limit to CDs, allowed the team to store more data, such as animations, music and environments. Despite this, the team found it difficult to fit the game into the PlayStation 2's 32 megabytes of RAM, due to the scale. The game's size also created difficulties for the testers, due to the variety of options.

Benzies felt that creating a living city was the *"underlying principle"* of the game's concept during development. Executive producer Sam Houser felt that the game's 3D element allowed the *"chemistry of the team [to come] together perfectly for the first time"*.

A major difficulty the team encountered was converting all game elements into a fully 3D world, including the sound and radio stations, as well as designing and voicing the non-player characters, due to the amount that existed within the open world; producer Dan Houser said that there was about 8,000 lines of recorded dialogue in the game, while audio programmer Raymond Usher estimated about 18,000. The basic technical elements of the game began to work together in mid-2000, with a carjacking mechanic prototype and stable streaming model. Streaming was initially intended to be reserved for music and map geometry, but other elements were eventually included when it became apparent to the team as more data was entered.

When designing the game world, the team initially created a *"hybrid city"*, which producer Dan Houser describes as *"a post industrial Midwest slash east coast generic"* city. Upon developing within this game world, the team realised that basing the design on a real location meant *"you have a lot of things you can say about it"*. As a result, the team redesigned Liberty City, which had been previously featured in Grand Theft Auto (1997), basing it loosely on New York City. The city is broken into three islands: an industrial section representing Brooklyn and Queens, a commercial centre resembling Manhattan, and suburbs similar to New Jersey. The islands unlock as the story progresses; the team wanted players to *"start out feeling poor and work to being richer"*. Dan Houser describes Liberty City as a *"hybrid of a generic American city"*,

including Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, New York, and Philadelphia. He felt that the parallel realism of the world allowed the team to make more social commentary than previously. Sam Houser cited films and shows like Heat (1995) and The Sopranos (1999–2007) as inspiration for the setting, and wanted to emulate them in the game. He also cited the influence of The Legend of Zelda series (1986–present) and the film Goodfellas (1990), describing Grand Theft Auto III as *"a cross between a gangster movie and an RPG"*. Dan Houser also cited The Legend of Zelda and Super Mario 64 as influences.

The team developed the story and design simultaneously. *"We use the story to expose the mechanics, and we use the mechanics to tell the story,"* said Dan Houser. Houser found it difficult to create the narrative, as the game is so strongly focused on player freedom. He wanted the story to be more nuanced and interesting than the generic *"rise and fall and rise again of a superhero bad guy"*. The game's script was also focused on mission objectives, attempting to implement high amounts of interactivity. Houser felt that each mission is *"its own short story"*, and part of an *"overarching story"*. Houser and co-writer James Worrall drew influence from mob films, and the mafiosi featured in films by Martin Scorsese. When writing the story, Houser and Worrall regularly met with the designers, and filled a room with post-it notes to reconstruct the story components to shape the game.

Many of the game characters were animated using motion capture, filmed at a rented studio at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, though this was limited by technical restraints. The character movement was also treated as being cinematic, though limited polygons heavily inhibited this. Animating non-player characters entering and driving cars proved to be

difficult for the team, due to the variety of vehicle designs. *"It involved chaining together dozens of different animations and altering key frames in code,"* recalled software engineer Alan Campbell. The team used varying camera angles when animating the game's cutscenes, in order to evoke different emotions. For the voice acting, the team wanted *"natural, subtle performances"*, which proved difficult as many of the actors *"had in their head the idea that because video games are animated their performances needed to be animated"*, explained motion capture director Navid Khonsari. The game's playable protagonist is unnamed in the game, and his name is not officially revealed as Claude until his appearance in Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas (2004). He is a silent protagonist, never speaking throughout his appearances. The team decided to make Claude silent primarily because it *"did not seem like a major issue"*, due to the other challenges faced during development, and also partly to allow players to identify with the character, as the character will be who the players want him to be.

Grand Theft Auto III features about three-and-a-half hours of in-game radio material. For the music, the team sought a broad diversity, to recreate the real sensation of skipping through radio stations, reflecting the gangster movie culture invoked by the game. The team used the talk radio stations to add character to the city, and provide a *"unique take on American life"*. The team used real DJs to portray those on the radio. In doing so, the team wrote unusual dialogue for the DJs, seeking the effect of *"high production values and absurd content"*. Music director Craig Conner assembled the assets of the radio station—music, advertisements, DJ dialogue, station imaging.

by: unseen64.net:

Prior to the 2001 release of the final game, several modifications were made on Grand Theft Auto III. The changes were apparent as several promotional materials had previously displayed features that would be absent in the final version of the game. While cuts and changes are frequent during game development, the changes in GTA III were of note as they were made around the time when the September 11, 2001 attacks occurred; this led some gamers to speculate that at least some of the changes were motivated by the attacks. Although little was disclosed about the types of changes to be made and when they were conducted, Sam Houser, the president of Rockstar Games (based in Manhattan, New York City), was quoted September 19, 2001 in mentioning a review would to be undergone for GTA III, in addition to confirming the delay of the game's release by three weeks (the original, rough release date was suggested by Houser to be on October 2, 2001):

" ...our biggest games, including Grand Theft Auto [III], have been delayed slightly. This decision is based on two factors, firstly it has been a little difficult to get work done in downtown Manhattan in the last week since basic communications infrastructure has been intermittent at best, and secondly we felt that a full content review of all our titles was absolutely necessary for us in light of the horrifying event we all witnessed in NYC last week. As for Grand Theft Auto [III], since the game is so huge the review is no short process. So far we have come across certain small contextual references that we were no longer comfortable with, as well as a couple of very rare game play instances that no longer felt appropriate to us. We [apologize] to you and all the people waiting for this game to ship for the delays that have now ensued, but I'm sure you can understand our reasoning."

The only change on the game that has been suggested to have been made shortly after 9/11 was of the police cars' paint scheme; the new colour scheme of the LCPD is modelled in a panda-like black-and-white design similar to the LAPD, while the old color scheme of blue with white stripes (seen in previews and the manual map) resembles that of the NYPD. Pre-release screenshots in the game's official website depicting police cars had also undergone modifications, around a week after September 11. The NYPD-

like paint scheme would eventually be reintroduced in Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories, but uses black instead of NYPD's blue colour.

Another cut is that of Darkel, an in-game character, for the final version of the game. Mentioned in several early video game publications and websites, Darkel was to be a revolutionary urchin who vowed to bring down the city's economy. One mission involved stealing an ice cream van, using it to attract pedestrians, then blowing it up (this mission would eventually be given by El Burro instead in the final version of game to kill a group of gang members). Darkel was also originally expected to give out Rampage-like missions, and even had his voice recorded for this part. Rockstar later decided that they would like to go back to the original system of giving out rampages as featured in Grand Theft Auto and Grand Theft Auto 2. Although Darkel and his missions were removed indefinitely, the character remains listed in the manual's credits, as well as having a character texture retained in the game's data files.

Another reminisce of Darkel's existence is an abandoned tunnel in the city, associated with the character in the official website, and includes four homeless people in a group wielding Molotov cocktails. Both the tunnel and the four homeless people are retained in the final version of the game. The Dodo airplane, the only drivable aircraft in the game, was also a point of discussion; the wings of the vehicle were significantly short, while an uncontrollable full-winged version has been seen flying around the city.

However, the plane has, for months before 9/11, had a short wingspan, as evidenced from a preview in Game Informer (Issue #95), which indicated that the plane was to be used in a (now abandoned) mission to loft the plane high enough in its brief flight and reach new areas of the city. The Dodo is considerably difficult to control, usually resulting in short flights (although it is possible to fly the plane continuously around Liberty City when properly trained).

Other changes included stopping the selection of certain character models when using cheat codes in, removing the ability to blow limbs off non-player characters in only the PlayStation 2 version of GTA III, elderly pedestrians with walkers, school children as pedestrians and a school bus.

Grand Theft Auto III was released to critical acclaim. Metacritic calculated an average score of 97 of out 100, indicating "universal acclaim", based on 56 reviews. It is the sixth-highest rated game on Metacritic, tied with a number of others. Reviewers liked the game's sound, gameplay, and open world design, though some criticism was directed at the controls. Tom Bramwell of Eurogamer called Grand Theft Auto III *"a luscious, sprawling epic"*, and Official PlayStation Magazine named it *"the most innovative, outlandish, brilliant video game"*. GameSpot's Jeff Gerstmann described the game as *"an incredible experience that shouldn't be missed by anyone"*; IGN's Doug Perry named it *"one of the best titles of the year, on PlayStation 2, or on any system"*.

Many reviewers found the 3D graphics a welcome change from the 2D of the previous games. GameSpot's Gerstmann particularly praised the character and vehicle models, and the overall texture quality of the city. GameSpy's Andrei Alupului found the graphics *"really rather impressive"*, describing the car models as *"greatly improved"* over those in Midnight Club. Eurogamer's Bramwell considered the graphics *"generally pleasant to look at"*, but considered it inferior to games like Gran Turismo 3 and Ico. Justin Leeper of Game Informer described game world as *"stunning in scope and detail"*, and Perry of IGN found it to be *"on a scale that's truly epic"*. Game Revolution's Ben Silverman called the city a *"technological marvel ... that captures the essence of gritty city life in amazing detail"*.

IGN's Perry considered the game's sound *"unbelievably and meticulously delivered"*, particularly praising the soundtrack, voice acting and sound design, stating that it was *"really approached as if it were done for a movie"*. Eurogamer's Bramwell echoed similar remarks, describing the city sounds as *"perfect"* and the soundtrack as *"monstrous"*. The sound was described as *"terrific"* by GameSpot's Gerstmann and Game Revolution's Silverman, and 1UP.com appreciated the subtlety of the in-game radio stations. AllGame's Scott Alan Marriott named the music *"the true star"* of the game.

Reviewers considered the style of the game's missions to be a welcoming departure from those in previous games. 1UP.com described the missions as *"wonderfully creative"*, while GamesMaster appreciated the diversity. IGN's Perry similarly appreciated the variety and scale of the missions, and praised the amount of available side missions. GameSpy's Alupului described the game's story as *"well-paced"* and *"coherent"*, featuring plot elements akin to a mob film. GameSpot's Gerstmann found the missions entertaining and challenging, but noted that exploring the game world also offers *"a great deal of fun"* to players.

Reactions to the game's controls were mixed. Alupului of GameSpy found the game *"controls beautifully"*, both while driving and on-foot. Game Revolution's Silverman identified the control issues as the game's only flaw, although praised the responsiveness of the driving mechanics. Matt Helgeson of Game Informer similarly described the driving as *"great"*, but noted *"clunky"* combat. GamePro's Four-Eyed Dragon found the cars simple to manoeuvre. Edge described the game's combat as *"an awkward system that stymies play"*. 1UP.com noted particular flaws in the targeting system, explaining that it *"often focuses on the wrong guy"*.

Grand Theft Auto III became the best-selling video game of 2001, and has sold over 14.5 million copies since.

It received multiple nominations and awards from gaming publications. It was awarded Game of the Year at the Game Developers Choice Awards, and from GameSpot and GameSpy.

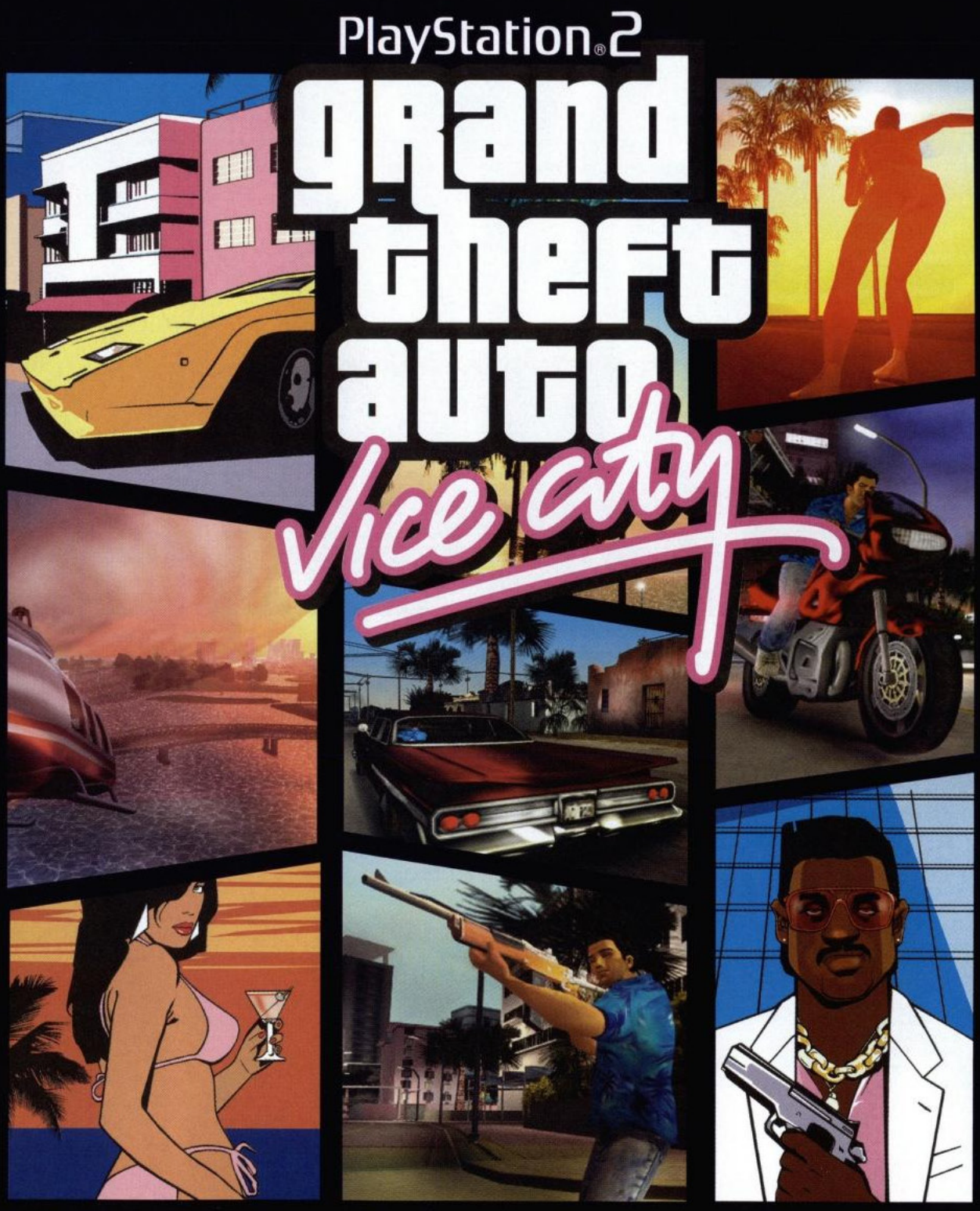
Grand Theft Auto III was released in 2002 for Windows, supporting higher screen resolutions and draw distance, and featuring more detailed textures. A GameCube release was planned, but later cancelled. The Xbox port features custom soundtrack support as well as improved audio, polygon models, and reflections over the previous ports. The Trilogy was also released for OS X. For the game's tenth anniversary in December 2011, War Drum Studios ported it to several iOS and Android devices. The port is almost identical to the Windows version of the game, in addition to enhanced textures and models and touchscreen controls. A PS3 version was released on in 2012 via the PlayStation Network. The original PS2 version was also released for the PS4 in 2015. In 2012, a modding community under the name RAGE Classic Team released the map of Grand Theft Auto III ported over to Grand Theft Auto IV, named Grand Theft Auto III: RAGE Classic.

Prior to and since the release of Grand Theft Auto III, the game generated several controversies. GameSpy awarded Grand Theft Auto III with Most Offensive Game of the Year, calling it *"absolutely reprehensible"*. They wrote that the game rewards players for *"causing mayhem"* and *"killing innocent people by the dozen"*, ultimately questioning its appropriateness within the industry. The notoriety of Grand Theft Auto III resulted in Wal-Mart's decision to check the identification of purchasers who appeared to be under the age of 17, when purchasing mature titles. In an essay, assistant professor Shira Chess identified the lack of conclusion to player violence, due to the ability to respawn upon death or incarceration, and found that it denies the *"reality of mortality and simultaneously [forces] it on players"*. When speaking about the game's depiction of violence, producer Leslie Benzies claims that is intended as comedic, and that the game is *"not meant to be taken seriously"*. Producer Dan Houser stated that the team was conscious of the offence that the game would attract, but *"never marketed it in a way that exploited that"*.

The game allows players to participate in sexual activities with prostitutes, and murder them to reclaim the payment. This was met with widespread controversy. The game also received controversy for its depiction of crime, and allowing violence against police officers. Psychologist David Walsh of the National Institute on Media and the Family stated that the game *"glamorizes antisocial and criminal activity"*, and that *"the purpose of the game is to perpetrate crime"*. In response, Kotaku blogger Owen Good wrote that the game does not reward players for *"proficiency at crime, no matter how much it is accused of doing so"*. Joanna Weiss of The Boston Globe noted the *"adrenaline"* that players feel when committing crimes in the game, excusing the game's violence due to its mature classification. The National Organization for Women spoke out against the game in January 2002, asking Rockstar and Take-Two to withdraw the game from sale as it *"encourages violence and the degradation of women"*. Matt Richtel of The New York Times wrote that the activities within the game *"crossed the line into bad taste"*.

Grand Theft Auto III was initially released in Australia with an MA15+ classification. After re-reviewing the game, the Office of Film and Literature Classification (OFLC) banned it, due to its depiction of sexual content and violence to prostitutes. This prompted distributor Take-Two Interactive to appeal to the OFLC, who reaffirmed the banned status on 11 December 2001, after reanalysing the game and seeking the professional opinion of a forensic psychologist. This prompted Take-Two to recall the game in Australia, and Rockstar to make appropriate changes to the game; a modified version was re-released with an MA15+ classification in January 2002, removing all instances of sexual acts with prostitutes.

On 25 June 2003, teenage stepbrothers William and Josh Buckner shot and killed Aaron Hamel and Kimberly Bede. In statements to investigators, the perpetrators claimed their actions were inspired by Grand Theft Auto III. In response, on 20 October 2003, the families of Hamel and Bede filed a $246 million lawsuit against Rockstar Games, Take-Two Interactive, Sony Computer Entertainment and Wal-Mart. Rockstar and Take-Two filed for dismissal of the lawsuit, stating in United States district court on 29 October 2003 that the *"ideas and concepts"*, and the *"purported psychological effects"* of the perpetrators, are protected by the First Amendment's free-speech clause. Jack Thompson, the lawyer representing the victims, denied Rockstar's claims, and attempted to move the lawsuit into a state court for consideration under Tennessee's consumer protection act.



WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/VICECITY

SOUNDTRACK ALBUMS AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY ON EPIC RECORDS
WWW.VICECITYRADIO.COM

SONY MUSIC

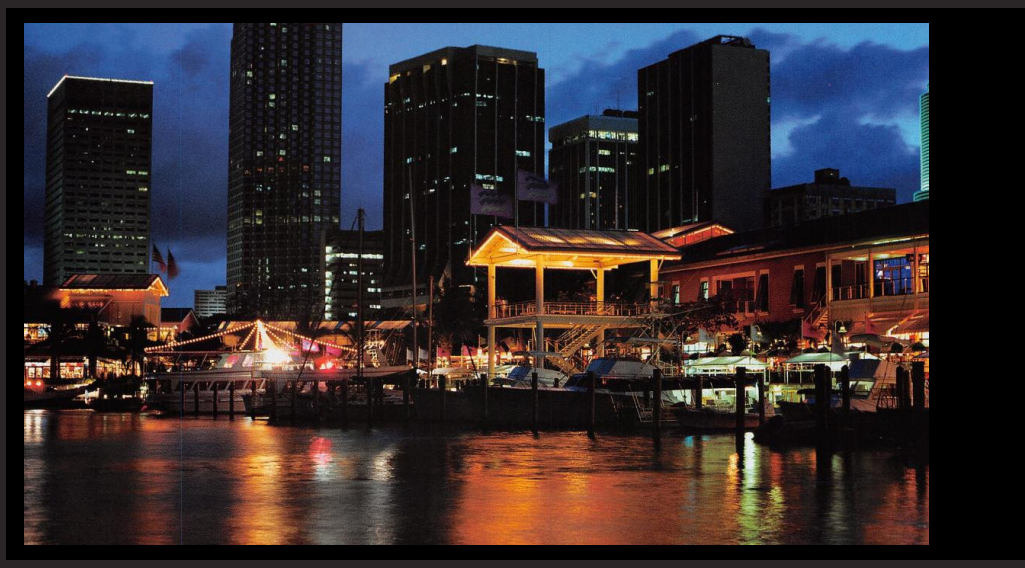
MA15+

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © 2002 Rockstar Games, Inc. Rockstar Games, the Rockstar Games logo,Rockstar North and the Rockstar North logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Rockstar Games and Rockstar North are subsidiaries of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. "Epic" and Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada. © 2002 Sony Music Entertainment Inc.All other marks and trademarks are properties of their respective owners. All Rights Reserved. Note: Rockstar will be following IDSA guidelines for M rated games in the marketing of this game. This game contains violent language and behavior and may not be appropriate for persons under the age of 17. It is a comic interpretation of gangster activity and the story, names and incidents portrayed herein are fictitious. No identification or similarity to actual persons, living or dead, or to actual events is intended or should be inferred. Any resemblance is coincidental. The makers and publishers of this videogame do not in any way endorse, condone or encourage this kind of behavior.

GOING TO MIAMI

by: PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) 2002 September #06

Rockstar cashes in on Eighties chic in the bound-to-be-huge *GTA: Vice City*



HOW COOL CAN Rockstar make the next game in the *Grand Theft Auto* series? Well, if your definition of 'cool' spans back as far as the revered Eighties, the pretty damn cool. *Vice City*'s setting is to Miami what Liberty City was to New York, and will embody everything the most decadent period of the 20th Century has come to represent. "The vibe is glamour, power and corruption," explains Sam Houser, Rockstar's President. And you know what that means; more violence, blood-letting, carjacking and savage beatings, only now it's 110 degrees in the shade and you're wearing a pair of deck shoes and a pastel-coloured suit with the sleeves rolled up. You can just smell the corruption...

So, why all the excitement? The legendary *GTA 3* has already sold six million copies worldwide and has been a resident of the Aussie sales chart since it was released. People are actually buying PS2s just to play it. Therefore, demand for this sequel is going to be huge. And in a move which comes as no surprise, Sony Computer Entertainment has seen fit to enter a deal with Rockstar to ensure that only PS2 owners will have the privilege of playing *GTA* games. And that's for the next *four* years!

Rockstar is being traditionally guarded on specific details, but here's what we're allowed to tell you now:

• *Vice City* is a *totally new game*, not, as was previously reported, an add-on disc to *GTA 3*.

• Development was started on the game straight after the completion of *GTA 3* back in November 2001.

• The theme (as we've already said) is Eighties Miami. While the obvious reference point is cult cop show *Miami Vice*, the fact is that *GTA: Vice City* might be a better comparison with *Scarface*. Chainsaws and all.

• Hardcore fans guessed the sequel's location after discovering various clues in *GTA 3*. The most obvious being when one game character said, "I'll see you in Miami," Clever, no?

• It will feature an improved game engine, which will improve on collision detection and clipping. And much, much more cut-scene footage.

• *Vice City* will be massive and better, with a whole new game world to explore. Here's Sam Houser's more eloquent description; "It's an even more revolutionary gaming experience. This will be reflected in the size of the game, the scope of the gameplay and the extent of the gameplayer's freedom." The man don't lie.

• It might just feature a helicopter with machine guns, have you bombing around the Miami Keys in a speedboat and tearing up the sun-baked streets on a high-powered motorbike.

• There'll be all-new 'vehicles', characters and plenty of buxom, bikini-clad beach babes.

• The soundtrack will be absolutely massive, featuring classic Eighties fare (reportedly a major passion of Houser's) so expect synths, soft rock and hip-hop, plus a liberal dose of Phil Collins, AC/DC, Rick James, Michael Jackson, Judas Priest and Giorgio Moroder. No, really.

• You might have to do a mission wearing roller skates.

• And finally. It's out in late October *this year*!

Unfortunately, Rockstar is yet to release screens, but the art they have released, including the logo against a Miami sunset, is a great indication of the game's feel. In the meantime, we're all off to buy hair gel, cologne, pencil ties and scour Red Eye Records for Jan Hammer and Harold Faltermeyer vinyls.

YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET

by: Richie Young@ PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) October 2002 #07

It's not a sequel. It's the next instalment of *Grand Theft Auto*.

The Biz'

Rockstar is a relatively young company, and was founded as recently as 1998. The four English founders Terry Donovan, Jamie King and brothers Sam and Dan Houser are now based in New York and the company now employs staff right around the globe. The company's philosophy is very enviable, and despite their worldwide success there is no ego apparent. "There is not one person who is going to sit there and be all mighty," says Producer Jeronimo Barrera. The *GTA* developers are know known as Rockstar North, but were formerly known as DMA Design. Based in Scotland, Rockstar North provides the lion's share of the technical know-how when implementing the game design into the *GTA* games.

There are big games and then there are big games. On top of that are games like *Grand Theft Auto*. In true style but simultaneously breaking all moulds made before it; *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* is poised to become a landmark experience. In an already saturated world of mass entertainment, that's no easy feat.

Rockstar are the young company behind the *GTA* franchise. *OPS2* recently met the team in Miami (which Vice City is based on), including half of the company's four founders - Dan Houser and Terry Donovan.

If the company's attitude and achievements were to be captured they'd be the youngest and brashest. They'd breeze into town and up the hallways with a "fuck you" attitude, and consequently conquer all before them with little concern of anything but.

Rockstar do what they want. And their games are living proof.

It's no secret that Rockstar's landmark games (most notably *Grand Theft Auto III*) have generated both critical and commercial reward. When *GTA III* was unleashed on the (somewhat unknowing) Australian public last year, three things happened.

First, gamers automatically had to re-adjust how they judged games. *GTA III* successfully redefined freedom in a virtual space and 'scripted' adventure games looked decidedly archaic when compared to this new, non-linear environment.

The 'games' industry moving closer to being recognised as a legitimate form of entertainment was the second. *GTA III*s experience had gamers in a cinematic, edgy, fun and fulfilling world while still maintaining its identity as a 'true' game. As talk rages on surrounding the games and movie industries "merging closer together", *GTA III* can be credited as one of the pioneering games to take a giant leap.

Australia's gaming public unwillingly became the centerpiece of worldwide discussion as the original batch of *GTA III* copies were pulled from shelves and banned due to their content. To this date, no 18+ rating is in place for videogames here, meaning that games like *GTA* cannot be released unless some very slight alterations are made. Rockstar make no bones about it though. They are in the business of making games that they would personally enjoy playing. Obviously, their games (including *State of Emergency*, *Max Payne*, *Smuggler's Run* and the upcoming *Midnight Club 2*) are skewed for adults. Only. These are not kid's games in the vein of *Rayman* or *Crash*, and they claim they've never targeted the younger audience into buying their games.

Having said that, the version scheduled for Australia will only have very slight amendments made and industry movements are still in place to lobby the Government and the Classification Board [Office of Film and Literature Classification] for Australia to have an 18+ rating. This is an ongoing issue for game publishers nationwide, who also urge gamers to have their voices heard through these same channels.

Moving the industry forward is as important to Rockstar as is pushing the boundaries of videogames and they don't think the former can happen without the latter. "The only way to move the industry forward is with the games. Not just a little, a huge fucking lot," says Terry Donovan.

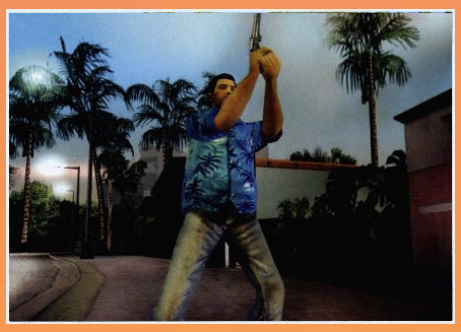
Perhaps Terry himself, put *GTA III* into the best perspective when he compares it relative to the music industry. "The '60's were wild. No one knew what they were doing. The '70's were like OK, maybe we should have like, record companies. The '80's moved to MTV. All the record companies

and their systems that they had in place maxed out. Everybody went global. It was the time when real mega stars were formed. Now, the music industry tries to re-live that glory. They had a business model that was invented in, I don't know, 1974. We take X, we give the artist that, we give the songwriter that; we pay a little money to the bloke in radio, pay a little money to the bloke on TV and everything should work. Now it doesn't. What we lost sight of was the *lunacy*, the creativeness.

"The fact is that the good part of the music industry was when noone knew what they were doing. To be frank, I don't really think anyone in the games industry knows what they're doing. We certainly don't. It's not very old. There's no rules. There's no deals. There's no clatter of management's lawyer's agents. This industry is kinda where the music industry was in the early '60's; lots of people with lots of good ideas and a chance to do something really interesting.

"Now, *Grand Theft Auto III* has grossed more than *The Gladiator* and *The Matrix*. When you think about it, it's a bit of a mind twister. You're like, 'I thought they got an Oscar for that'. It doesn't add up anymore. We got to this place very quietly and very humbly as a group, as an industry and suddenly we're slightly better than everybody else. But we still don't know what were doing."

Yep, that's how important *GTA III* is. As we roll toward the future, it's going to be up there with the *Pongs*, *Pac-Mans*, *Tekkens*, *GTs*, *Metal Gears* and *Marios*. At such a crucial point of the 'next generation' of gaming, it may even become the most important.



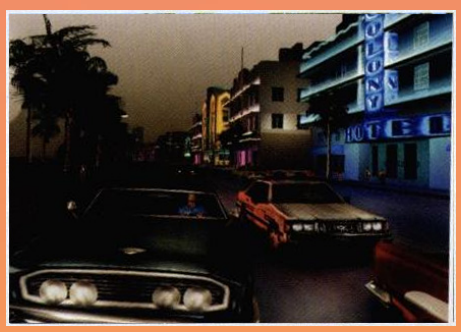
WHAT ABOUT VICE CITY?

And now it's time for the next instalment! Secrecy has shrouded *GTA: Vice City* since the first details of its very existence were leaked. Until now.

"We've taken so many risks and now, I think we're in a place to just drop our underwear and show you what we really got," says Terry Donovan.

Noone has published or had access to screenshots. It was the most notable absentee at this year's E3 and to say that details have been scarce is a gross understatement.

To put it bluntly, *GTA: VC* is a true sequel that is set astound even the most critical gamer, as well as the increasing field of opposition that it faces (like Activision's *True Crime*). The entire game has been completely 'overhauled' for this version. What's even more amazing is that the sheer size and freedom of *Vice City* is set to even dwarf that was seen in *GTA III*. Any fan of that game will find the mere thought of that almost unfathomable!



There are many changes that are immediately noticeable (like the increased variety and the skin-modelled characters, flowing clothes and streaming textures), although it will only be over extended play and exploration of Vice City that the true depth and detail will emerge. Both Terry and Dan are keen to express the desire of what they wanted to achieve with *Vice City*. Most prominent of which, was ensuring that they don't release a sub-par quality game to eager gamers and set them up for disappointment.

"We don't think that we're good yet but we're not here to hand you more of the same. It's not in out blood. It wouldn't be fair on you. It wouldn't be fair on ourselves," says Terry.

TIME FOR THE NITTY GRITTY

As we inch closer towards the game's release, more details are set to emerge. Even after *OPS2* saw the game firsthand and was privy to 'inside' information, we were still assured that even more secrets and details will come to light. Gamers everywhere have been scouring anything that they can get their mitts on for *Vice City* information. Without further ado, here it a list and rundown on the things that you can certainly expect from *Vice City*. Don't worry, you're not the only one whose mind is racing, heart's pumping and mouth watering...

VICE CITY

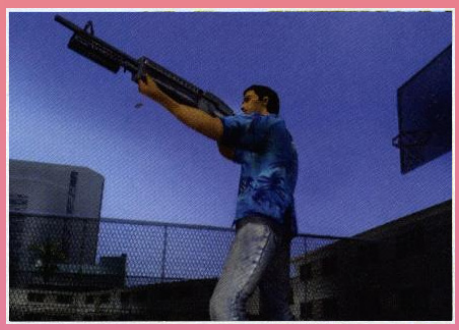
WILL BE equal parts *Miami Vice* and *Scarface*, Massive.

WILL BE ABOUT corruption, glamour, power, drugs, sleaze, crime and decadence.

HAS all the (anti)-stylisation and cultural references from the '80's. Rockstar intend that the plethora of

subtle points of this virtual environment will bring the world alive.
IS BASED in Miami. At the same time, Miami is home to the most beautiful and the scariest people in the world. Geographically, it is a cesspit of crime, glamour and drugs. Vice City is closer to Miami than Liberty City (of *GTA III*) is to New York, Maps and layout of Vice City and Miami are almost identical.
IS only the beginning.

THINK BIG, MISTER.
When *OPS2* flew to Miami to meet with Rockstar, they (and Rockstar North) were still working hard on the game and experimenting with adding even more objects and vehicles than the numbers listed here. The following should be used as a guide only, but we'd expect more, not less!
SIZE Vice City is estimated to be a 2 to 2.5 times the size of Liberty City with a far greater use of height. There are also a lot more indoor areas including nightclubs and strip clubs that open up new aspects of the *Grand Theft Auto* world. No kidding.
VEHICLES *GTA III* had 40 ve-



hicles. In Vice City there are now over 100. And it's just not cars, either! There are rumours about some of the more novel cars (yes, there is a drivable golf buggy!), but *OPS2* can also confirm the existence of a Harley Davidson-type bike with excellent handling and physics and cars will feature multiple passengers. There will also be far more use of the water, so you can expect plenty of boats as well. Wanna fly a helicopter? Then head to Vice City.. Cool? Yes?
FREEDOM Many new animations and abilities are now possible with an overhauled game engine. The hand-to-hand combat and targeting systems are brand new. The other significant innovation, is the ability to shoot out car tyres. This opens up a whole new world of gameplay elements and will realistically affect the car's handling when you're at the wheel.
MISSIONS There are now twice as many missions than seen in *GTA III* and many of them are now far more comprehensive and consist of multiple parts. Think 'Bomb the Base' from *GTA III*.
ARTILLERY This area has yet another overhaul. *GTA III* included 15 weapons. Vice City will feature at least 40, one of which will be a knife.
ANIMATIONS *GTA III* = 150 animations. Vice City = over 400. 'Nuff said.
FMV CUT SCENES *GTA III* = 30 minutes of cut scenes. Vice City = 1 hour and 20 minutes.
HUMOUR The humour in *GTA III* was one of the main things that gamers found the most endearing. The scripts (written by James Wall and Dan Houser) have subse-

quently had similar treatment. You liked *GTA III*'s humour? Just like everything else, *Vice City* is set to take the cake as they up the ante! Children of the '80's will be particularly impressed.
ENVIRONMENTS *Vice City*'s world is far more varied. Expect to explore everything from slums, mansions, swamps, the beach, luxury islands, Hispanic ghettos, the sea and the city. Between 50 and 60 interactive indoor locations will be included.
THE CAST *Vice City*'s cast of voices can be aligned far more closely with that of an feature film. Rockstar were only prepared to reveal the name of one actor at the time of going to press, Ray Liotta (*John Q, Narc, Blow, Goodfellas*) will play the lead character of Tommy Vercetti. They have also claimed "it (will have) a bigger cast than any movie that will be released this year." Having said that though, Rockstar's sole interest is making the world's most intriguing games and storytelling, not in the business of making movies. Thus, the actor's names won't be used to market *Vice City* and that they have been included solely for the purpose of improving the story and experience. This is something that they should be applauded for.
MUSIC You like Love Media "making sure all American radio sounds the same"? *GTA III* had a staggering three hours of radio and music included. Now, *Vice City* is set to include between nine and ten hours of radio. Further to that, Rockstar say that, "It'll be the greatest soundtrack in any game or movie ever." A big claim, but again they were unable to elaborate. Little is yet known about further plans, but we were assured that

all will be revealed "in time" and it will be "huge".

Among many others, track listing will include Kool and the Gang, Blondie, Flock of Seagulls, Laura Branigan, Judas Priest, Hall and Oates, Grandmaster Flash and Michael Jackson's "Startin' Somethin". This may not sound like a lot to may readers, but this is destined to be a collection of the most definitive artists from that era. This is no *Wedding Singer* soundtrack. By all accounts, this collection alone will be able to have bragging rights.

WEATHER "We're trying to make a hot, bright game with some bad weather. So the rains and the storms definitely come but they are less a feature than they are in *III*. It has to feel like Miami but the weather does come on," says Dan Houser.

UP FOR IT

When GTA: Vice City is unleashed, it will mark a new point in the way gamers look at games. Like a true classic, it will also be seen as a landmark title - astounding, given the innovation already seen in GTA III. If there ever was a game to look forward to, this is it.

Webbed Wonders

Rockstar may be staying thight-lipped over exact plans for its forthcoming *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* game, but that hasn't stopped the New York-based company producing a couple of interesting Web teasers. The construction of two sites, kentpaul.com and concretetv.com, both accessible through Rockstar's newly designed home page, has once again fuelled a barrage of speculation and rumour. Here's *OPS2s* definitive rundown of the two sites and what they contain.

kentpaul.com

Cunningly disguised as a fansite with naff Flash animation and crude design, kentpaul.com purports to have been constructed by Paul from Kent, whose major passion is 'everything Eighties'. In fact, the Web site is registered to Rockstar's New York office and contains enough refrences to suggest that the company's beatnik President Sam Houser is the more likely author. The big hit for fans is the mailable Miami e-postcard which appear to contain an in-game image of *Vice City*. Among the site's clickable sections lie obvious pointers to the game's content. 'Famous Faces' could have been called 'Game Characters', while 'Social Problems' has a list of crimes with *GTA: Vice City* written all over them.

concretetv.com

Equally interesting is Rockstar's hiring of US video-editing guerilla Ron Rocheleau to help its campaign. The real-life artist creates video montages made up of obscure fims and music for a late-night slot on Manhattan's public access channel, MNN, and the two pieces of his work that are featured on concretetv.com are clearly a homage to the themes of *Vice City*.

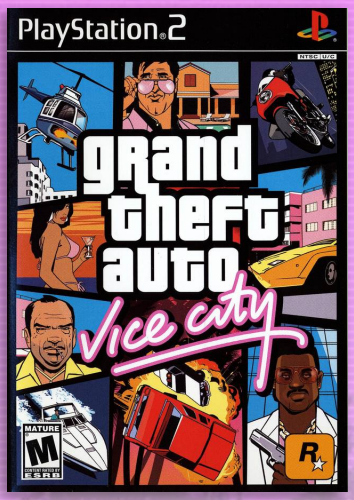
In amongst footage of B-movie monsters, car chases, workout routines, kung-fu masters and sequenses from blurred-out grumble flicks, there are some obvious references to the game's Eighties vibe through clips of *Flashdance* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. Meanwhile, we can also catch glimpses of rap outfit The Fat Boys, disco dancers, strippers and car crash sequences. According to Rocheleau, this project took him just a week to complete.

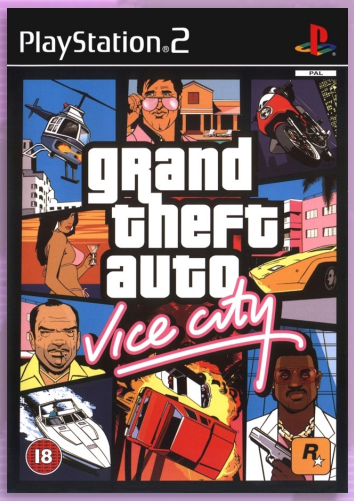
Dan Houser on GTA III getting banned in Australia

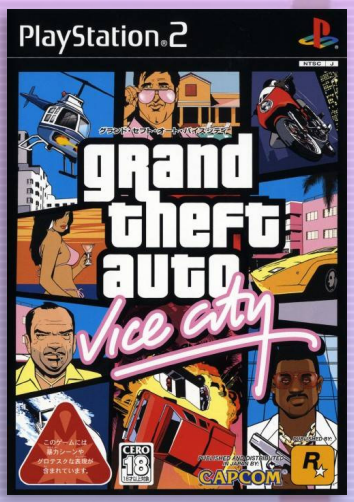
"It's a funny anomaly there, because Australia isn't a particularly censorious country at all but that's why there is no 18-plus!" says Dan. "Without the 18-plus rating - I mean, I was watching violent films at five. My brother would sit with my mate and I watch it. It never made me want to commit those things.

"It was never in the game design. That is just the problem of having a freedom world and giving people lots of things to do. The two least visual aspects of the game - the hookers and the collecting money off the people you mugged or killed - are both really cartoony. And because they had to be quick, are possibly the least cool aspects of the whole game. At that point it becomes very much a videogame. So to have that as something you're banning it for is so silly. The problem with any movie or videogame you want to make into a core thing is that you can take these things out of context and they sound horrific. When you look at them you're like. 'How can anyone actually think this going to undermine society in any way?" But that's a separate deal for everyone to get their heads 'round. We get kinda bored, in fact very bored, of being the bad boys of the videogames business and fighting these fights. We're just making games that we're into."

9.5







J N P

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

Developer	Rockstar North
Publisher	Rockstar Games
Release date	(us) October 27, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City is the sixth title in the Grand Theft Auto series. Set within the fictional Vice City, based on Miami, the game follows Tommy Vercetti following his release from prison. After he is caught up in an ambushed drug deal, he seeks out those responsible while building a criminal empire and seizing power from other criminal organisations in the city.

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City is an action-adventure played from a third-person perspective. The player controls the criminal Tommy Vercetti and completes missions — linear scenarios with set objectives — to progress through the story. It is possible to have several active missions running at one time, as some missions require the player to wait for further instructions or events. Outside of missions, the player can freely roam the game's open world and has the ability to complete optional side missions. Composed of two main islands and several smaller areas, the world is much larger in area than earlier entries in the series. The islands are unlocked for the player as the story progresses.

As in GTA III, the player may run, jump, or drive vehicles to navigate the game's world. The player uses melee attacks, firearms and explosives to fight enemies. The firearms include weapons such as the Colt Python, an M60 machine gun and a Minigun. Players can use a first-person view while aiming with the sniper rifle and rocket launcher. In addition, the game's combat allows the player to commit drive-by shootings by facing sideways in a vehicle. The game provides the player a wide variety of weapon options — they can be purchased from local firearms dealers, found on the ground, retrieved from dead enemies, or found around the city.

In combat, auto-aim can be used as assistance against enemies. If the player commits crimes while playing, the game's law enforcement agencies may respond as indicated by a "wanted" meter in the HUD, which increases as the player commits more crimes. On the meter, the displayed stars indicate the current wanted level, and the higher the level, the greater the response for law enforcement (for example, at the maximum six-star level, police helicopters and military swarm to lethally dispatch players).

During the story, Tommy meets characters from various gangs. As the player completes missions for different gangs, fellow gang members will often defend the player, while rival gang members will recognise the player and subsequently shoot on sight. While free roaming the game world, the player may engage in activities such as a vigilante minigame, a fire fighting activity, and a taxi cab service. Completion of these activities grants the player with context-specific rewards. As Tommy builds his criminal empire, the player may purchase a number of properties distributed across the city, some of which act as additional hideouts where weapons can be collected and vehicles can be stored. There are also a variety of businesses which can be purchased, including a film studio, a taxi company, and several entertainment clubs. Each

commercial property has a number of missions attached to it, such as eliminating competition or stealing equipment; once all missions are complete, the property begins to generate an ongoing income available for the player.

Rockstar North began to develop Grand Theft Auto: Vice City in late 2001, around the time of Grand Theft Auto III's release. While initial development only involved creating 3D models, executive producer Sam Houser said *"it really kicked off at the beginning of 2002"* and lasted about nine months. After the release of the Windows version of Grand Theft Auto III, the development team discussed creating a mission pack for the game that would add new weapons, vehicles, and missions. Upon further discussion, the team decided to make this concept a stand-alone game, which became Vice City. The game was announced on 22 May 2002, during the E3. It was Rockstar North's most expensive game at the time, with a budget of $5 million. On 5 September 2002, the company announced that the release date of 22 October had been postponed until 29 October to meet product demand. By 15 October 2002, development of Vice City stopped as the game was submitted for manufacturing.

The game is set in 1986 in fictional Vice City, which is based heavily on the city of Miami. Vice City

previously appeared in the original Grand Theft Auto (1997); the development team decided to reuse the location and incorporate ideas from within the studio and the fanbase. They wanted to satirise a location that was not contemporary, unlike Grand Theft Auto III's Liberty City. The team wanted to choose a location that had various similarities and differences to New York City — the inspiration of Liberty City — eventually leading them to Miami, which producer Leslie Benzies describes as *"a party town, all sun and sea and sex, but with that same dark edge underneath"*. Sam Houser called it *"the grooviest era of crime because it didn't even feel like it was crime ... it was a totally topsy-turvy back-to-front period of time"*. The team intended to make Vice City a *"living, breathing city"*, for the player to feel like *"life still goes on"* while the character is inside a building.

The game's look, particularly the clothing and vehicles, reflect its 1980s setting. Many themes are borrowed from the major films Scarface (1983) and Carlito's Way (1993), the latter for its characterisation and portrayal of nuanced criminals. The television series Miami Vice (1984–89) was also a major influence and was regularly watched by the team throughout development. Art director Aaron Garbut used the series as a reference point in creating neon

lighting. In recreating a 1980s setting, the team found it *"relatively painless"* due to the distinct culture of the time period and the team's familiarity of the era. The art team was provided with large volumes of research, as well as reference photographs from other members of the development team. The team organised field research trips to Miami shortly after the development of Grand Theft Auto III, splitting into small teams and observing the streets.

The team spent time *"solving [the] riddle"* of a speaking protagonist, a notable departure from Grand Theft Auto III's silent protagonist Claude. Ray Liotta portrayed protagonist Tommy Vercetti. Liotta described the role as challenging: *"You're creating a character that's not there before ... It's so intensive"*. When recording the role, the team used blue screen in order to allow Liotta to visualise *"how it's gonna move"*. The team ensured that the player felt *"real affinity"* for Tommy, making the narrative a key development interest. Dan Houser described Tommy as *"strong and dangerous and prepared to wait for the right opportunity to arrive"*. Director Navid Khonsari recalled Liotta frequently complaining on set and found him difficult to work with as a result. *"In some sessions he was ... into it, but then sometimes ... he was very dark and couldn't work"*, said Sam Houser. Following the game's success, Liotta reportedly claimed that he was underpaid for the role.

The majority of the game's animations were original, with very few borrowed from Grand Theft Auto III. For the characters, the team used motion capture and stop motion animation techniques; cutscenes use the former, while gameplay movements use a combination of both techniques. The team encountered difficulty in animating motorcycle animations, due in part to the variety of models. Pedestrian character models use skins in Vice City, allowing the artists to produce more realistic characters. There are 110 unique pedestrian models throughout the game world alongside roughly 50 story characters; each character is rendered using twice the amount of polygons and textures found in Grand Theft Auto III. This also impacted the character physics, improving gameplay aspects such as weapon-hit accuracy. Some character models and scenarios were inspired by films such as The Godfather (1972), and the game's presentation was inspired by action television shows of the 1980s. The interplay between Tommy Vercetti and Lance Vance was crafted to be similar to the relationship of Miami Vice's Sonny Crockett and Ricardo Tubbs.

The game features 8,000 lines of recorded dialogue, four times the amount in Grand Theft Auto III. It contains over 90 minutes of cutscenes and nine hours of music, with more than 113 songs and commercials. The team was interested in the challenge of creating the game's soundtrack, particularly in contrast to Grand Theft Auto III's music, which Sam Houser described as *"clearly satirical and its own thing"*. In developing the radio stations, the team wanted to reinforce the game's setting by collating a variety of songs from the 1980s and therefore performed extensive research. The radio stations were published by Epic Records in seven albums—known collectively as Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Official Soundtrack Box Set—alongside the game in October 2002. Vice City contains about *"three times as much"* talk radio as Grand Theft Auto III. Producer and talk show host Lazlow Jones stated that the small percent-

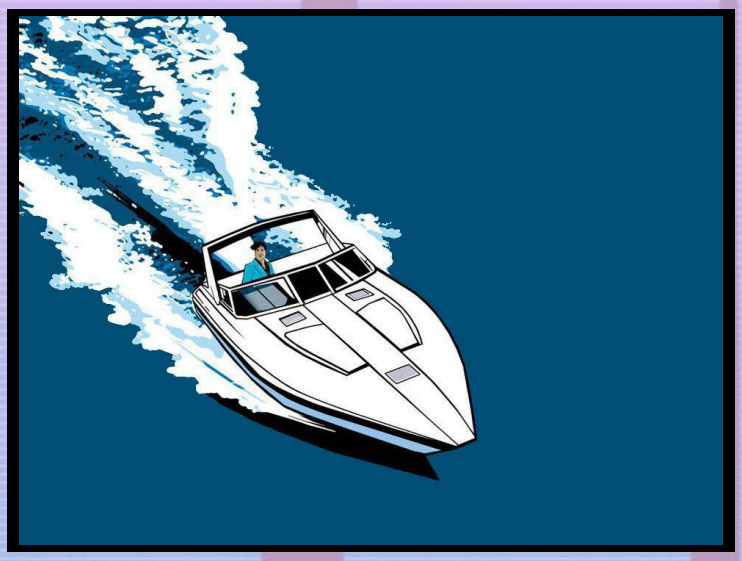
age of station listeners that actually call in are *"insane"*; in Vice City, the team *"bumped it up a notch"*, emphasising the extremity. Dan Houser felt that the talk stations give depth to the game world.

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City was released to critical acclaim. Metacritic calculated an average score of 95 out of 100, indicating "universal acclaim", based on 62 reviews. It is Metacritic's highest-rated PlayStation 2 game of 2002, and the fifth-highest rated PlayStation 2 game overall, tied with a number of others. Reviewers liked the game's sound and music, open-ended gameplay, and open world design, though some criticism was directed at the controls and technical issues. IGN's Douglass Perry declared it *"one of the most impressive games of 2002"*, and GameSpy's Raymond Padilla named the experience *"deep, devilishly enjoyable, and unique"*.

Reviewers generally considered the missions an improvement over Grand Theft Auto III, although some noted occasional awkwardness and frustration. IGN's Perry wrote that the game's missions give the player *"a stronger feeling of being inside a story within a world that truly exists"*. Game Informer's Matt Helgeson found the missions to be more complex, and AllGame's Scott Alan Marriott felt that the storyline was improved as a result. Marriott also found the lead character of Tommy to be more engaging than Grand Theft Auto III's Claude; IGN's Perry felt that Rockstar *"found the right person and the right choice"*, and Edge wrote that Tommy *"sweats charisma"*, commending Ray Liotta's performance.

The game's open world design was praised by reviewers, many of whom felt that it contained more detail and felt more alive than its predecessors. GameSpy's Padilla made favourable comparisons between Vice City and Grand Theft Auto III's Liberty City, noting the former's level of detail. Game Revolution's Ben Silverman wrote that the game's depth is *"unparalleled"*, praising the world's realism and detail, while AllGame's Marriott commended the *"ambitious scope in design"*.

Marriott of AllGame named Vice City an *"unforgettable listening experience"*, and Perry of IGN declared the music as *"the most impressive list of songs in a game"*. Many reviewers commended the game's radio stations and talk radio, and many felt that the game's collection of licensed 1980s music fit the tone and time period of the world. The voice acting also received praise; GameSpot's Jeff Gerstmann named the cast of characters *"colorful and memorable"*, and IGN's Perry found the voice acting *"among one of the best of its kind"*. Game Revolution's Silverman felt that the acting *"gives the story credence"*.



Many reviewers found that the game offers a better variety of vehicles than Grand Theft Auto III, and found them easier to control; GameSpot's Gerstmann named the driving *"more exciting and dangerous"*, and IGN's Perry found the motorcycle's controls pleasing. In addition to the vehicle handling, reviewers noted improvements in the targeting and shooting mechanics, although still recognised issues. Helgeson of Game Informer wrote that *"targeting is improved to the point where combat can actually be fun"*.

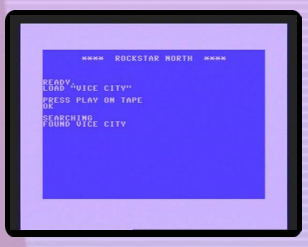
Some reviewers recognised an improved draw distance over Grand Theft Auto III, although many identified frame rate drops during hardware-intense sequences. The changes in character models polarised reviews; while GameSpy's Padilla and IGN's Perry noted the improvement in character models, Eurogamer's Tom Bramwell considered it *"maddening to see that character ... models haven't been smartened up at all"*. The game's artificial intelligence and long load times were frequently criticised in reviews, and many reviewers noted the awkward camera angles and environment during gameplay.

Within 24 hours of its release, Vice City sold over 500,000 copies. Within two days of its release, Grand Theft Auto: Vice City sold 1.4 million copies, making it the fastest-selling game in history at the time. It was the highest-selling game of 2002 in the United States; by 2004, the game had sold 5.97 million units, and by December 2007 it had sold 8.20 million. By July 2006, it had sold 7 million copies and earned $300 million in the United States alone. Next Generation ranked it as the highest-selling game launched for the PS2, Xbox or GameCube between January 2000 and July 2006 in that country, beating Grand Theft Auto III and Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas. In Japan, Vice City sold about 223,000 copies in its first week and over 410,000 by January 2008. The game earned a "Diamond" award in the United Kingdom, indicating over one million sales. By March 2008, the game had sold 17.5 million units worldwide, making it one of the best-selling PlayStation 2 games.

Vice City received multiple nominations and awards from gaming publications. It was named the Best PlayStation 2 game at the 1st British Academy Games Awards, the Golden Joystick Awards, and from Entertainment Weekly, IGN, and GameSpot. It was also awarded the prestigious Ultimate Game at the Golden Joystick Awards. The game was awarded Best Action/Adventure Game from the British Academy Games Awards, GameSpot, and IGN. The game's sound also received several awards and nominations: it won Best Music from GameSpot, and was nominated for Best Sound, and it won the award for for Sound at the British Academy Games Awards. It won Design at the British Academy Games Awards and was nominated for Best Graphics (Technical and Artistic) by GameSpot. The game was the runner-up for IGN's Reader's Choice Overall Game of the Year and was nominated for GameSpot's award for Best Story. It was awarded Best PC Game at the British Academy Games Awards.

Mike Snider of USA Today wrote that Vice City *"raised the bar for video games"*, citing its interactivity, violence, and soundtrack. Kotaku's Luke Plunkett and PC Magazine's Jeffrey L. Wilson both named Vice City the best game in the series, with the former naming it the *"perfect Grand Theft Auto experience"*. The readers of Official UK PlayStation Magazine named Vice City the fourth-greatest PlayStation title ever released. Vice City also appeared on Japanese magazine Famitsu's readers' list of top 100 games in 2006; it was one of the only Western titles on the list. Art director Aaron Garbut felt that, alongside its predecessor Grand Theft Auto III and successor San Andreas, Vice City led the trend of open world games.

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City was released for Windows in 2003, supporting higher screen resolutions and draw distance, and featuring more detailed textures. A GameCube release was planned, and cancelled again. The Xbox port features custom soundtrack support as well as improved audio, polygon models, and reflections over the previous ports. In 2012, War Drum Studios ported Vice City to several iOS and Android devices.



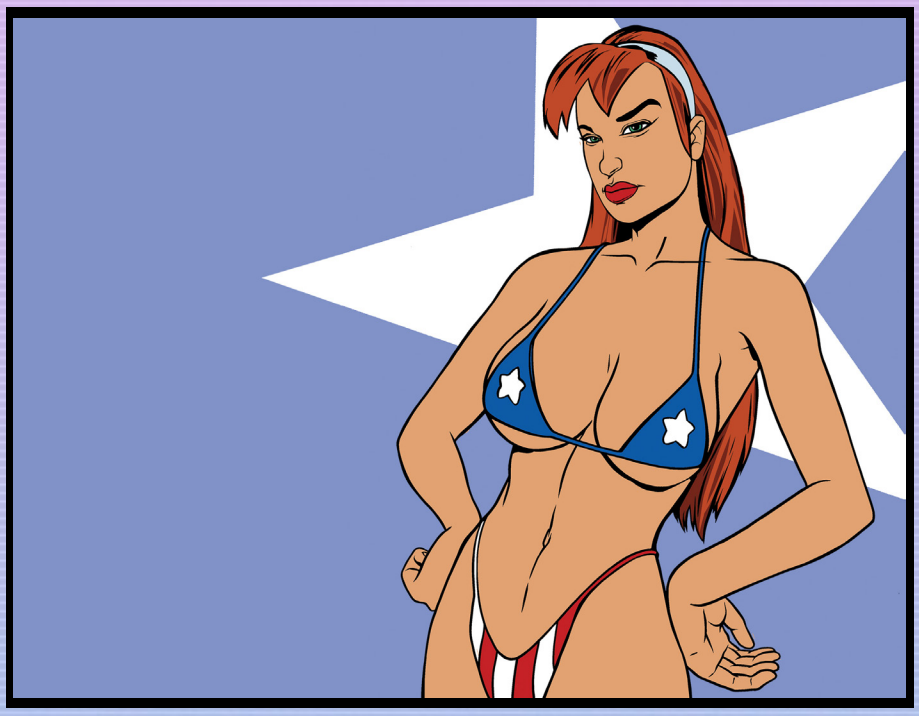
Similar to its predecessors, Vice City generated several controversies. It has been labelled as violent and explicit and is considered highly controversial by many special interest groups. Peter Hartlaub of SFGate noted the game's *"mindless violence"*, but simply attributed it to the developers' attempt to achieve accuracy. Jeremy Pope, who worked on various Rockstar games including Vice City, vowed never to work on violent games again due to their portrayal in mainstream media. In Australia, the game was pre-edited to receive an MA15+ classification; an uncensored version was released in the region in 2010, retaining its classification.

In November 2003, the Haitian Centers Council and Haitian Americans for Human Rights staged a protest in New York publicly criticising the game, contending that it invited the player to harm Haitian immigrants and claiming that it depicted Haitians as *"thugs, thieves and drug dealers"*. In response, Rockstar issued a press release apologising and acknowledging the concern, but insisted that the violence should be taken within the context of the game, which also contains violence towards other ethnic groups. When New York mayor Michael Bloomberg threatened distributor Take-Two Interactive with legal action, the company apologised and removed offensive statements from future copies of the game. In January 2004, North Miami's majority Haitian-American council filed an ordinance to ban the selling or renting of violent games to anyone under 18 without parental permission. The proposal, apparently sparked by Vice City, was supported by North Miami mayor Josaphat Celestin, who stated *"We don't believe the First Amendment was written to protect those who want to incite violence"*. The case was later downgraded from federal court to state court.

On 7 June 2003, 18-year-old Devin Moore shot and killed two Alabamian police officers and a dispatcher before fleeing in a patrol car; he was later apprehended. In statements to police, Moore reportedly said *"Life is like a video game. Everybody's got to die sometime"*. A $600 million lawsuit was filed against Rockstar Games, Take-Two Interactive, Sony Computer Entertainment, GameStop, and Wal-Mart, claiming that Moore frequently played Vice City and that his experience with the game led him to commit the crimes. The plaintiffs' attorney, Jack Thompson, claimed the graphic nature of the game caused Moore to commit the murders. Thompson removed himself from the case Strickland v. Sony in November 2005 after being scrutinised by the judge for unprofessional conduct. In March 2006, the Supreme Court rejected an appeal by the defendants to dismiss the case.

In September 2006, Thompson brought another $600 million lawsuit against Cody Posey, Rockstar Games, Take-Two Interactive, and Sony Computer Entertainment. The lawsuit claimed that 14-year-old Posey played the game obsessively before murdering his father, stepmother, and stepsister on a ranch in Hondo, New Mexico. Posey's defence team argued that he was abused by his father and was taking Zoloft at the time of the killings. The suit alleged that the murders would not have taken place if Posey had not obsessively played Vice City. The case was dismissed in December 2007, as New Mexico held no jurisdiction over Sony or Take-Two.

On 27 July 2017, the Psychic Friends Network sued Rockstar over the character named Auntie Poulet who shares similarities to the late psychic Miss Cleo who was actually voiced by Miss Cleo.

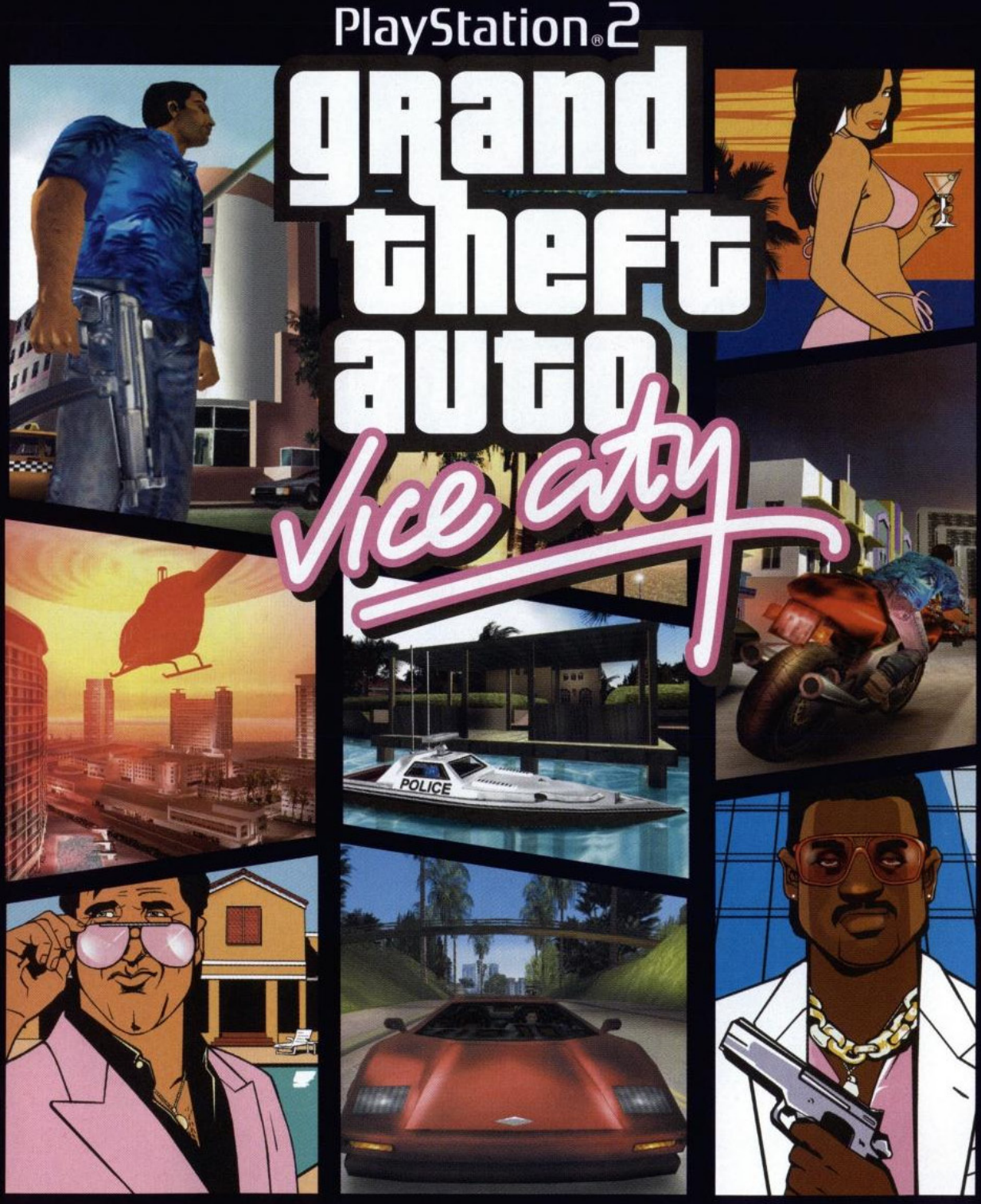


GAOL TIME FOR GTA PLAYER

by: PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) October 2004 #29

Youth arrested for Grand Theft Auto

Be careful next time you're playing *Vice City* because some poor bloke in Florida has wound up in prison because of the game. Anthony Jones was phoning a co-worker at the Croos Creek Barbeque Restaurant who was at home playing *Grand Theft Auto Vice City* with a child. At one point during the conversation he said "There's a bomb in the building. Everyone needs to get out!" He was apparently talking to the child about *Vice City* when he said this but the co-worker didn't realise and called the police. The restaurant was evacuated and Jones was arrested for making a false bomb threat. He is now awaiting a court date and faces up to 15 years in prison.



WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/VICECITY

SOUNDTRACK ALBUMS AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY ON EPIC RECORDS
WWW.VICECITYRADIO.COM

MA15+

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © 2002 Rockstar Games, Inc. Rockstar Games, the Rockstar Games logo,Rockstar North and the Rockstar North logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Rockstar Games and Rockstar North are subsidiaries of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. "Epic" and Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada./© 2002 Sony Music Entertainment Inc.All other marks and trademarks are properties of their respective owners. All Rights Reserved. Note: Rockstar will be following IDSA guidelines for M rated games in the marketing of this game. This game contains violent language and behavior and may not be appropriate for persons under the age of 17. It is a comic interpretation of gangster activity and the story, names and incidents portrayed herein are fictitious. No identification or similarity to actual persons, living or dead, or to actual events is intended or should be inferred. Any resemblance is coincidental. The makers and publishers of this videogame do not in any way endorse, condone or encourage this kind of behavior.

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas

by: P2 #49

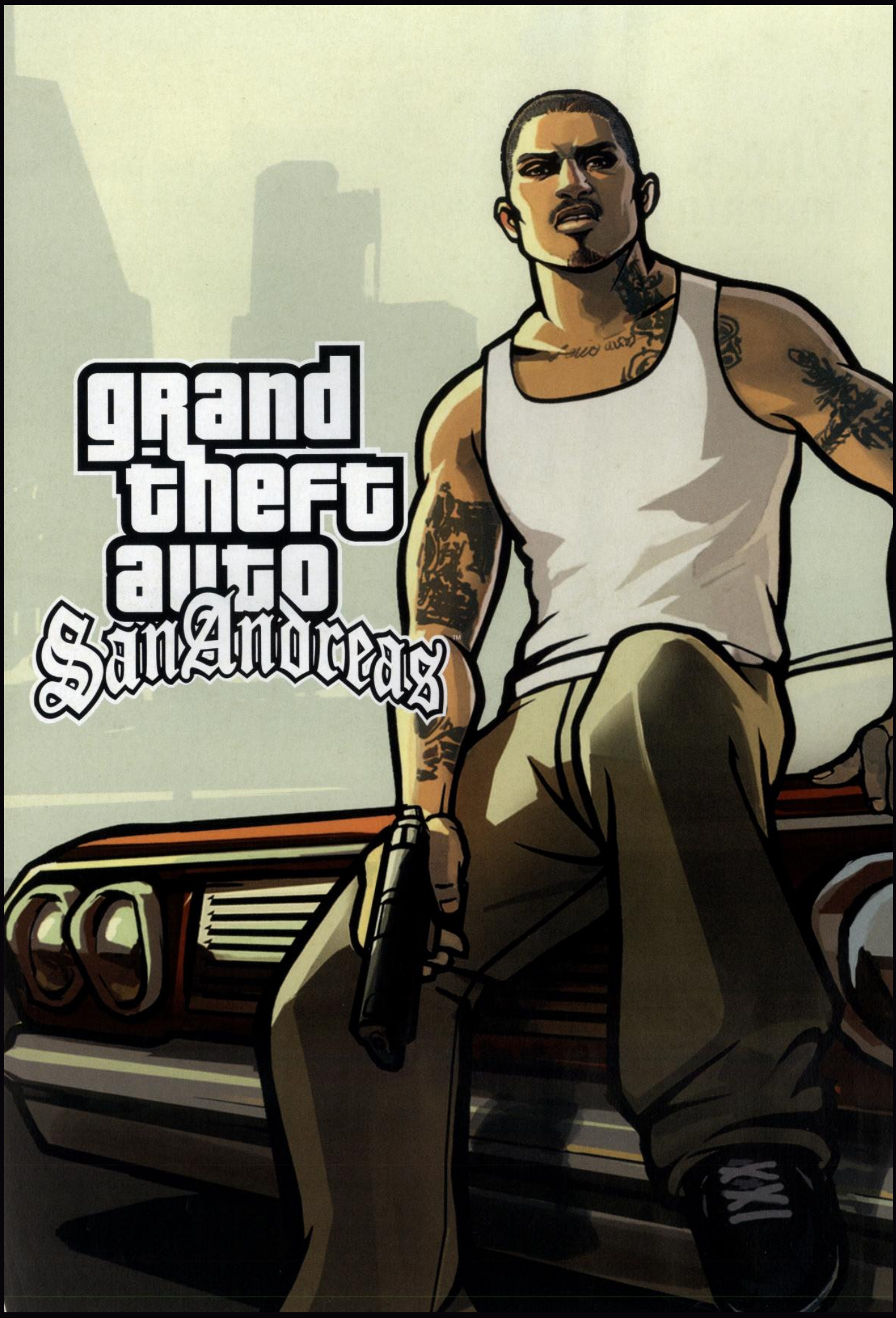
The rumours continue...

The internet has been buzzing about the future of Rockstar's phenomenally successful series since the title was first revealed earlier in the year. As expected, Rockstar remains tight-lipped and can't confirm or deny any of the stories that are doing the rounds.

WEATHER: Many of the first fake screenshots spread around the World Wide Web kept the same graphical style of the old games, but added new weather effects. It seems that fans are hungry to see how the game mechanics change if, for example, you are caught in a snow storm - icy road conditions could certainly lead to you losing control of your vehicle and setting off the sort of automobile destruction not seen since *The Cannonball Run*. Rain could also be used to make *San Andreas* more serious than its predecessors - remember how it was used so effectively in serial killer classic Seven, presenting a dour and forboding atmosphere?

MUSIC: There has veen much debate about what artists should appear on the soundtrack this time and, of course, it all depends what era Rockstar decides to set the game in. However, 50 cent and Happy Mondays among the names being thrown around, it's obvious that anyone could yet be signed to provide the sonic thrills. Yet, the most intriguing rumour we've heard doesn't involve the musicians, but the way in which you listen to them. There were many times in *Vice City* when we'd be driving around, Motley Crue would kick in and we'd continue cruising to listen to the rest of the song before getting out of the car to continue the mission. Now, imagine that the main character had a Walkman or an iPod, so you could have music wherever you went? It would be pure sonic heaven, and the music could then play a larger part in the set-pieces of the game - imagine blowing away a powerful crime boss as *I Fought The Law* by the Clash blasted out, or relaxing with your female admirers by the pool as *Hotel California* kicks in...

VIOLENCE: The humour in the GTA series has always meant that, even though the Daily Mail readership might get its knickers in a twist about the violence, it was all orchestrated with a smile on its face. Yet, since Rockstar went down the grainy and murky snuff movie route with *Manhunt*, could we perhaps see a style change for *San Andreas*? No one is going to be as impressed with mowing down innocent civilians any more as we've all done it (in-game!) before, but what if (like *Manhunt*) the game was darker and grittier and your character was deadly serious as he brutally murdered innocents? Suddenly the series would have the power to really shock again.


grand theft auto
San Andreas™

AND THEN THERE WERE THREE

by: Richie Young@ PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) October 2004 #29

San Andreas is more than just the name given to the world's most notorious "fault line". It's also the groundbreaking new game that's about to rock the entertainment industry

"The game's as much about cool cars, listening to nice music and watching the sunset as it is about running around with a gun and completing a mission. It's this idea of being somewhere and really working on giving that world as much life as possible, from what you hear on the radio to what the pedestrians say and what a billboard say. To build on that is something that we've been trying to do since the first *GTA* days. I think we've really taken it to a whole new place with this one," says Dan Houser.

E3, the videogame industry's most important annual event, is a sight to behold. The lights, the noise, the excitement and the sheer competition for attention are at frenzied levels. It's not surprising though, that hiding upstairs at this year's show is *Grand Theft Auto: San Anderas* - the game that everyone at E3 2004 is pining to see. With the game are Rockstar bosses Dan Houser (Vice President of Creative) and Terry Donovan (CEO). And being the only Australian magazine invited to see the game is not only an honour, but also pretty hefty responsibility.

The way the Rockstar guys talk about their *GTA* world is with the utmost respect, and they're well aware that their game is good enough to justify the hype. So in a heavy shroud of secrecy, it is LA Convention Centre meeting room 301a that houses the hottest property at this year's E3. Downstairs, the PSP is making huge waves and hot new games like *Killzone* have everyone salivating. But these guys know that they have - hands down - the biggest, most original and most groundbreaking game since, well, *GTA3*. They have every right to be cool, calm and collected.

Watcha gonna do when they come for you?

The *San Andreas* world will se the introduction of all-new vehicles; but the Rockstar team also added a wider range of motorcycles to what was available in *Vice City*. Alongside the rideable pushbike, the police bikes will have the most significant impact to the gameplay. Not only will they be harder to evade, but it is likely the police bikes will open a new range of missions types that will be specific to them. Here, you catch a glimpse of how the CHIPs-like bikes will work in tandem when in pursuit. This particular bike is a San Andreas police officer cruising the streets of Los Santos. As you can see, he is escorted by a police helicopter. Check out the smoke particles in the exhaust and, of course, his Raybans!

The Sleepin' Giant

This is not hype for hype's sake. To give you an idea of how hot this property actually is - San *Andreas* is the videogame industry's equivalent of *The Lord of the Rings*, only with all the credible coolness of *Pulp Fiction*. For the common man, the amount of money that *GTA* has generated is so staggering that it ceases to seem real. Some would even call it insane. And an audience with the likes of Houser and Donovan is not to be scoffed at either. If you're a fan of videogames, this is like a meeting with Bob and Harvey Weinstein:) from Miramax and Quentin Tarantino all at once.

Days Terry Donovan, "We're in quite an interesting position internally - we've now got to show the game to people. Left up to us, we probably would have chosen not to show the game, but we wanted to "quell the rumour mill'. What you'll see should dwarf your expectation."

Of course, the sequel to the epic *Vice City* has been the subject to rumours for quite some time. And not only is Rockstar facing the challenge of matching the brilliance of *Vice City*, but the company is also well aware that even the public will expect *San Andreas* to be a blockbuster - quite a task considering that the *Grand Theft Auto* series has sold over 30 million copies to date worldwide.

Watching the team at work is like no other game company in the business. Everything that the company does is meticulous, and that is largely why the *GTA* games have been so successful. While they fully recognise that their game is straight for triple-A stock, they also make it a point to show the game's (slight) discrepancies. In the 90 minutes or so that *OPS2* has with *San Andreas*, the team point out various issues where parts of he game still need tweaking. Not only are most of them merely cosmetic, but they would easily pass by unnoticed if the team didn't point them out! But *San Andreas* is something special - and it's already way, way better than some games that are much closer to completion. Even though there are still months of production left to go, *San Andreas* is unbelievably good.

Up close and personal with CJ

As you play though the game, Carl Johnson, or CJ as he known to the Orange Grove Families, will reveal insights into his somewhat "colourful" past. What is immediately noticeable when you jump straight into the game, is the added detail and density of the world. Now, it really seems as though *GTA* has been given a new lease on life. While the environment has seen a leap in polygons, characters have also benefited from the developers' ability to push the PS2 technical capabilities to their maximum. Here, CJ is in the neighbourhood where he grew up. The level of detail in the characters is hugely improved. Check out the detail on CJ's face as well as the finer points that are evident in the buildings behind him. By the way, CJ also chews gum!

Aimin' high

With *Grand Theft Auto Vice City* universally regarded as one of the best games ever made, the Rockstar guys have gone about making *San Andreas* with a truly ambitious philosophy. The game is not about to "one-up" *Vice City* - it will absolutely blow it away. As gamers themselves, the development team is well aware that the demand for quality is at unprecedented levels, so it has tackled the challenge head-on.

San Andreas will have all the predictable inclusions, like more weapons and cars, plus a truckload of nifty surprises, such as rideable pushbikes. Where the game will really stand out though, is in the subtle but numerous tweaks that will add an unprecedented level of interactivity and draw even more parallels with reality.

"Obviously, sales are measured, really, based on the quality of the game and also people's response to it," explains Dan Houser. "The way to ensure that we address that appropriately is to over-deliver on them. The kind of stuff that we're doing is above and beyond people's expectations. That's the only way we can go back and find the original people who went out and bought *GTA3* in the first few months, and *Vice City* in the first few months. We want to say to them, 'this is worth your time again. This is not a lazy re-iteration of the original.'

"Taking things for granted is just not our style," he continues. The biggest jump that we noticed about *Grand Theft Auto* in terms of public perception was between *GTA2* and *GTA3* with the jump into 3D. Obviously, you can't make the jump into 3D every time. Our feelings was that we would tear the game apart and put it back together, with a level of size, scope and depth. We're totally changing the relationship that we have with the player, the relationships with non-player character and the relationship with the environment forever."

The thing is, Houser's claims about *San Andreas* are not just theoretical pipedreams. We're happy to confirm that the game will be far beyond even our high expectations. So any rumours that you've heard about the game can now finally be put to rest - the first one being where *San Andreas* is actually located.

Just the corn-rows thanks...

There were little to no criticism of the brilliant *Vice City* but Rockstar felt they wanted to add more interactivity and consequences into what CJ would get up to "off mission" in *San Andreas*. While there are the new additions in the sequel, it is indeed these subtle additions that will make the San Andreas one to behold. This is CJ getting a haircut from his barver, Old Reece at Reece's Hair Facial Studio in the mission "Menace." There are different styles that CJ can buy, and each will have an effect on how CJ is perceived. For instance, it will be likely that changing hairstyles will be a key tool for CK to change his appearance - just like it has been important to change the appearance of your cars previously. Again, there are notable features to see in this screenshot. Have a look at the real time reflections in the mirror. Awesome!

Big, Bad 'n' Bold

First of all, San Andreas is *not* just a city. It's a entire *state*, comprised of three major cities, each being the same size as Vice City. *San Andreas* will dwarf what was seen in *Vice City* - about five times over. After checking out the sprawling city of Los Santos, and then seeing how it takes up just one-fifth of the San Andreas map, it's astounding to think about how much more lies in wait for players to discover.

"The key thing of what we're trying to do is one state instead of one city - with three cities and all of the countyside in between. This was only possible because of Aaron (Garbut), our Art Director, who believed that he and his guys could do it. The thing that I want to stress more than anything else," Houser enthuses, "is that we have the best team working on this game. They're the best in the business right now. They're the most ambitious, they're the most progressive and they've got the most focus. You can just see that unity on the screen. We've now got a game with 400 different speaking roles in it - it's ridiculous. The production is at a scale that people won't have ever seen before.

"It looks very organic and very natural, and it takes your senses in and makes you you think that it's a real place. It also drives, walks, runs and rides super-well. You've got jumps in the right place and it flows very nicely, and that's just something that comes from doing this before. If there's one things that we thought was missing from *Vice City* it was hills - because hills are just fun to drive. So now, we've not only got hills within the cities - it was one of the reasons we were drawn into doing one of the cities based loosely on San Francisco - but we've also got stuff happening in the countryside.

"We've even got a mountain in the game... ridiculous! So there's a lot of stuff that we're capable of doing now that we can only do because we've been able to learn from our mistakes. We're pushing game design very, very far but all that means is that there's no manual on how to do it, and we're making stuff up as we go."

The New Stuff

Everyone expected Vice City' sequel to be bigger, better and faster. So that's check, check and check. And there's going to be pushbikes, more motorbikes (including police bikes!), cars, boats and weapons than ever before, too. But you already knew that, right? These elements alone would have made for a worthy sequel, but that's just the tip of the San Andreas iceberg. Dan Houser gives us the low-down on what else the San Andreas universe will bring to the table.

Eating:

"You could go an eat something in Vice City but it didn't mean anything - it was just a funny thing to do. This time, if you don't eat food you're going to lack energy and your player's going to slowly get thin. If you do eat food you're going to keep energy but if you eat too much food your guy's going to get fat. If you get too thin you're not going to have any strength and if you're too fat you're going to be slow and have no stamina. Everything has consequences in this way. If you're too fat you're going to have to lose some weight by going to the gym - get some muscle and then you'll be strong."

Car physics:

"We've massively improved the car physics. The game has always been a car chase game - not a race game. We've tried to build on that so that the chases are more fun and the cameras are more cinematic."

Haircuts:

"You can have your hair cut at any minute. You can choose your haircut - if you want a stupid haircut people are going to call you stupid. So, this whole idea of leisure time suddenly comes to life."

Improved targeting:

"In any third-person game, targeting is always an issue. Now that we've done multiple iterations of this, I think we've got something with the kind of control you're looking for, without being too difficult for the casual player."

Bigger:

"The quickest someone can get through *Vice City* with a guide was 36 hours that we know of. We can't do a complete play through *San Andreas* yet - but I can't see it being any less than three times the length. It's absolutely enormous."

Dynamic difficulty levels:

"The thing with games is that you constantly have to sell the idea to finish it, or a movie where everyone will finish it. Games are so long that if people get bored of find something impossible like a sticking point they'll stop. We'll subtly, without anyone noticing it... unless they've read about it in a magazine, make it [the mission] a little easier.

The New Stuff

Improved environment mapping:

"Everything looks a lot better and you get much better draw distances. There's far more detail and you can see further and clearer. When you're in the desert, you can get tumbleweed and effects like that drawing procedurally so that we can get very beautiful looking stuff.

"What this gives, is a map that looks really alive, a city that looks lived-in and feels like it exists. Some of the problems I see in games are that levels end up looking 'Toy Townish'. We've worked really hard to avoid that.

"We've got reflections on cars and there's been a dual pass on the light map. There are real-time reflections in mirrors and in the sides of cars. It's subtle stuff but it gives interactivity. You can get a haircut, and then you can go and have a look at it in the mirror. The way the game's looking is miles ahead of *Vice City*. Now we've got a really, really beautiful game on our hands."

Streaming:

"We are now streaming everything [for the game] straight off the disc - there is no other way. The other constant is the DVD. We almost filled it with *Vice City*, and even though there is better compression on most things we've now completely crammed the disc. So we've had to go dual-layer on the DVD disc, and some of it will have to come off the second layer. The player will never know this but that just shows you the kind of scale we're talking - the DVD is no longer big enough. The biggest thing that we're scared of for the PlayStation 3 is that the storage medium won't be big enough. We have to have a better storage medium.

Technical rendering:

"The render pipeline has been completely rewritten. We're still using Renderware for the lowest level stuff but the Technical Directors at Rockstar North - Adam [Fowler] and Obbe [Vermeli] really know what they need the code to do now so they are able to write a large portion of that themselves.

Animation and Gameplay:

"There's a huge variety of fighting stances and attacks now. Hand-to-hand combat's been massively reworked and there are new styles of carjacking - it looks more varied and gives a much better sense of life to everything. Every pedestrian in the game's now got a 'brain' and has unique activities that they can do. The AI [artificial intelligence] is so much more lifelike than it has ever been in the past and we've got much better facial stuff in there than we've ever had in the past."

The four-man drive-by:

"Drive-bys are no longer done on your own. You can now do them with four people. You can recruit a gang to go off and do some work with you, and you can start to run the territory when you're in a gang."

Swimming:

"You can now swim because we got tired of people saying 'why can't you swim in the game?"

I said, no pickle on the cheese...

Despite CJ's early reservations, it doesn't take long for him to fall back into old ways after hooking back up with his Orange Grove pals. The boys: Smoke, Sweet, and Ryder are still on the throes of LA gang life and after his return from Liberty City. CJ is soon back in the thick of the action. Here, the Orange Grove is getting set to roll on The Ballads gang (your rivals) in the mission "Drive-By." Notice how there are four people in the car? This is another new addition of the game - allowing four man drive-bys. Of course, Tommy Vercetti drives and shoots at the same time, but this new feature allows CJ the added benefit of having his three mates packin' heat! What's astounding is that this is just a taste of things to come and the *San Andreas* story will take even more major twists through two more cities, as well as all the countryside in between!

Three Cities, One Story

The three cities of San Andreas will be: Las Venturas (Las Vegas), San Fierro (San Francisco) and Los Santos (Los Angeles). All things considered, the playing area will resemble a mix between California and the desert areas of Nevada. While each is clearly based on a real-life counterpart, they definitely have the characteristic *GTA* spin and humour on them. Houser describes them as, "our deformed versions. They satirise America at large and California in particular."

The game is set in early '90s - a time when Californian and LA gangs dominated headlines, so you can expect the pimped-out low riders, pushbikes and weapons (think AK-47s) of the era. It's a confronting thought that it's as recently as 15 years ago that the USA experienced race riots on such a massive scale as the ones seen after the famous Rodney King/ LAPD incident. It's this kind of tense atmosphere that is introduced in *San Andreas*.

Rockstar won't reveal all, just yet. But apart from the vast expanses and geographical mix that will be Los Santos, they do tell us that San Firerro will have a lot of hills around and that Las Venturas will have a lot of gameplay based around its famous casinos. There is also speculation suggesting that once you start making a lot of money in the game and have access to planes and helicopters, you'll be able to fly between the cities rather than take the road.

In a move that is sure to appease fans, *San Andreas* will have even more building interiors than earlier *GTA* games. Again, this will add a new dimension to the *GTA* experience but even more significantly - *San Andreas* will not have load times. The only exception will be when entering a building, but even then the developers claim the time will be so slight it will be barely noticeable.

While it remains to be seen how the countryside and desert areas are presented (Rockstar won't show us outside the city of Los Santos yet), you can expect a massive dose of classic *GTA* humour and piss-taking. Also, we do know that the more rural areas will provide an opportunity to introduce a host of new vehicles. Missions and sub.games involving quad bikes and tractors are just some of the action that's likely to make the cut.

The Orange Grove

Carl Johnson, or CJ, is the new main man. Kicking off the game in Los Santos, CJ returns home after spending five years living in Liberty City (not-so coincidentally where *GTA3* is set, in case you've forgotten) after news of his mother's sudden death. CJ originally left Los Santos after his younger brother Brian was killed (CJ also has a sister, Kendl) but upon his return, CJ is reunited with his estranged older brother Sweet and hooks yp with his childhood gang, The Orange Grove Families. While CJ isn't too keen to get back into gang life, it's inevitable that things start to go astray after his old Orange Grove pals Smoke, Sweet and Ryder hear he's back in town.

What's immediately evident to us as we first see the game in action is the jump in detail and density that both CJ and the Los Santos environment feature. CJ's skin textures and body facial details can be far more clearly distinguished. Also, there are more buildings, people and action happening from the outset, adding to the game's realism. The Rockstar team estimate that *San Andreas* has a 35% to 50% increased polygon count over that seen in *GTA: Vice City*.

One of the more impressive and funny moments we see during our demonstration is when CJ and the Orange Grove members are about to get into their car when all of a sudden a totally separate carjacking takes place on the same street! These random moments were some of *GTA3* and *Vice City*'s highlights and Rockstar is promising more of the same.

Certainly, the early game focuses on the Orange Grove but Houser is quick to point out that the game is not all about the ghettos and gang life. The plot will move away from the Orange Grove, and you can expect the music to reach far beyond rap. Where Los Santos will centre around the Orange Grove, expect plenty of variety from CJ's life in San Fierro and Las Venturas.

Boys in da 'hood

The screenshot is of the boyz in action and after seeing it, we can testify that it not only adds to the excitement, but the animation look brilliant. When a drive-by takes place, you can do multiple passes of the target, and with each pass (depending on what side the car the target is on) everyone will hang out of the car and open fire. In this particular shot, you can see Smoke, Sweet, Ryder (without hat and sunglasses) firing in the mission "Drive-By". All three of them have separate AI, meaning that they behave and act independently. This is a significant step in ensuring the realism of the *San Andreas* experience is at a premium.

Funny Biz

The *GTA* series' humour is without doubt, one of its most endearing assets and, like the earlier games, the humour is packed solid in *San Andreas*! There'll eventually be plenty of radio stations as always, but the on-screen action and dialogue is already a highlight on its own.

In particular, one of the missions in out exclusive demonstration is classic *GTA*. Not only is the gameplay a superb mix of driving, evasion and shooting, but there are also loads of laughs in between. For a single-player game, *San Andreas* is gut-bustingly entertainment just to watch. After escaping a hotel that's just been raided by a SWAT team entering through the roof, CJ escapes in a car where he's been thrown an AK-47 assault rifle. Just like the "Phnom Penh '86" mission in *Vice City* where Tommy did loads of shooting from a helicopter, CJ must fend off oncoming patrol cars and motorcycle cops from the backseat. The motorcycle cops will also grab onto the car, like the T-1000 in *Terminator 2*, and you must shoot them off one by one. The mission ends on a hilarious note, though... When trapped in an alleyway with a police chopper headed towards you, its blades accidentally behead one of their own who's standing onboard your car trying to apprehend you and the rest of the Orange Grove!

Insanity and urban chaos in Los Santos!

With more citizens populating the cities, this naturally can only mean one thing: you'll have more enemies to contend with! There are a lot more random events that you will notice, but CJ will also find himself in more unpredictable situations like this. As someone testing the limits of the law, you're going to rub some people the wrong way - some of whom will actively come after you. This is CJ, stopped on the streets of Los Santos. Some Ballas members have stopped him in traffic and are attacking his car. Not good! This is yet another prime example of the detail in each level.

It's time for a fly-by!

Back by popular demand are the helicopters! Even though it's yet to be confirmed, all of OPS2's fingers and toes are crossed in hope that the choppers will allow CJ to travel between cities by air - which of course, would be another first for the series. In this shot, a police chopper is trying to land on the roof of St Brutus Motel. Even though it's in the background, the detail in the hill can be distinguished. As a general rule of thumb, it's correct to say that Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas will have approximately twice the draw distance of Vice City in each of the cities.

Know the Consequences

I doesn't take long for the action to heat up for CJ but the gameplay is a different beast altogether. Even when compared to the freedom and opportunities that Tommy Vercetti had in *Vice City*, the entire *San Andreas* world really is CJ's oyster. What's even more impressive is that every action that's taken will have a consequence. After their *Vice City* effort, Rockstar wanted to give the player an even more seamless experience, so their new game will see you build up experience and skills as you play.

Two new elements that we're able to reveal are that CJ is able to rob houses and will also be able to increase his firearm prowess. Robbing houses is something that CJ will learn on a mission, but it's a skill that he'll be able to take with him further into the game. Also, robbing will be more than just a matter of walking into a house off the street - a proper heist will require planning!

Where shooting is concerned, it acts in a similar way to the stamina build up after a lot of running in *GTA3* and *Vice City*. Where those games saw your ability to run long distances increase as you progressed, *San Andreas* will factor in how well you shoot and how many shootouts you've been involved in. Targeting is now closer to the system used in Manhunt, and CJ will also be able to use dual pistols to dispatch enemies. At the time of going to press it remains unconfirmed but we believe that these progression elements will also apply to hand-to-hand fighting attributes.

Furthermore, there are many more subtle elements that now come into play - paving way for a more realistic and interactive experience. Where it felt like you were playing around in *Vice City*, *San Andreas* will give you a feeling that you're really living there.

"At any moment you have a choice over what to do. What we've come to feel in looking back over *GTA3* and *Vice City* is that you have two states - 'mission' and 'off mission'. You're either working on the story or you're pissing about. And in *Vice City*, there was a little more 'connectedness' between them 'cause you were getting around and getting mobile phone calls from people. You felt more connected but you still felt that your actions didn't have that much consequence," Houser explains.

"What we're trying to do now is bring that 'distance' much closer together. You can do whatever you want but you're going to have to live with the consequences."

Cars will now accumulate dirt, particularly when you're driving cross-country or through the desert. As you always had to change your car's appearance with the help of Pay & Sprays, you'll also need to make sure that you maintain and clean your car to keep yourself inconspicuous. This idea also applies to CJ, who must be wary of changing his haircut from time to time.

Just like in real life, CJ needs to food to survive. Eating the right amount of food will allow you to retain good levels of stamina, but eating too much or not enough can both have dire consequences. Not only will an overweight CJ run slower, but even passing pedestrians will start to mock him! Pedestrians of San Andreas will notice the commotion and react!

"Your game is going to look very different to my game," Houser tells us. "Even though we could be at the same point in the missions, your game's going to look different to mine because it will reflect your interests and things that you've been focusing on doing. Mine's going to feel totally different. You might be super smart and well built and stuff where my guy might be a shabby, fat bastard but we're at the same save point in the game, which gives people a lot more ownership. The whole thing is done with the same sorts of *GTA* sensibilities that we've always had."

Who's mackin?

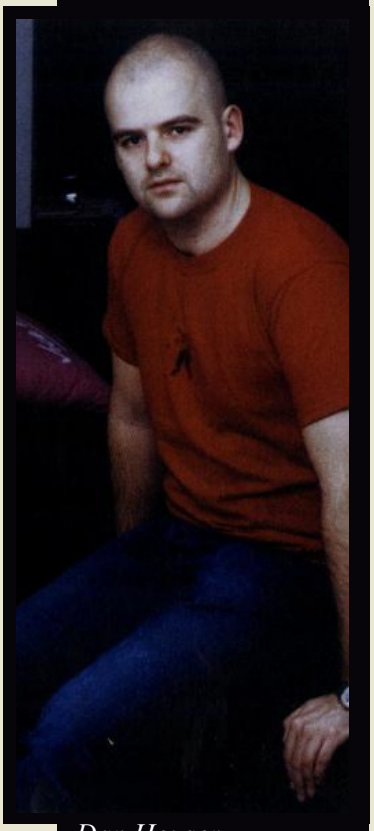
OPS2 was not only the first Australian magazine to be granted the honour of seeing the game first-hand, but we were also fortunate enough to have an audience with Rockstar bosses Dan Houser and Terry Donovan. Despite their enormous success, the pair are lovely blokes (!) and remain passionate about their games.

OPS2: Will there be recurring characters and what are the tie-in with the rest if the GTA universe?
DH: I'll put it like this, it's the third part in a loosely held together trilogy that started in 2001, that went to the mid '80s and has now come to the early '90s. So, we wrap up lots of storylines. I don't want to give away too much on the story but later on we'll reveal some characters. Really, at this moment we can only reveal the story set-up... You're Carl, you left Los Santos five years previously, you come home, your mum's been killed and you discover that your childhood friends are in quite a lot of trouble and behaving quite badly. But yes, you'll definitely see some old faces reappearing in some funny ways. It's about looking at people in a different angle.

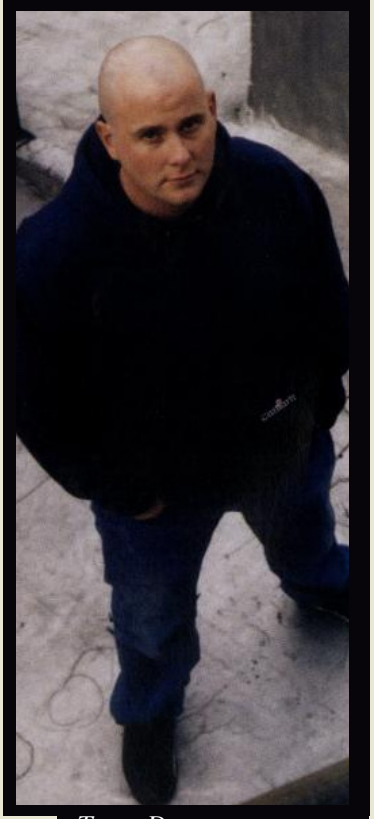
OPS2: It seems like there's a real *GTA* philosophy - is there any way that you're able to describe what you think it is that makes the games so special?
DH: It's just freedom, satire, places - these places feel like California, but they also feel like *GTA* and the sense of humour from the team - and a real respect for good videogame design and a real desire to push it forward. To get the best of multiple genres and create a unifying package. I think the other thing that we've always tried to push hard is that everything you see, from the posters, to the logo, to the TV commercials, to the advertising, to the game's front end, to the way the manual's laid out, to the website... it all reflects the way the end game looks. This unity is something that a lot of games lack. Everything you do makes it feel like it's a part of the same world.

OPS2: How do you feel when you see copycat games?
TD: It's kind of hard to answer that without...
OPS2: Slagging people off?
TD: Well, it doesn't really do us any favours. I think that they're probably good reminders to ourselves that we've got to move forward fast. It's just like a pinprick saying, 'don't rest on your laurels'. But then again, *Vice City* is pretty much the toughest competition out of anything that tried to follow *Grand Theft Auto 3*. People are still trying to chase around after doing a city when we're off doing a state...
DH: I don't think they really understand the game. It seems to me that a lot of the games pick up on one or two aspects of the games and forget about the rest. The reason we can do this is that we've got amazing people working on it. I think that everyone else will take a long time to catch up to that. We've tried our best to be original but some companies seem to thrive on copying people.

OPS2: But the whole idea of trying to out-do yourself must be fairly daunting in itself?
DH: Well, that's where we're lucky again because the teams in both New York and in Scotland are made up of very competitive people. For example, when someone says, "let's make it a state" rather than the art guy saying, "we can't do that" and the audio guy saying, "that gives us too much work"; everyone says, "we'll take on that challenge and add a whole lot of



Dan Houser



Terry Donovan

of new features ourselves". All the separate departments in development and production push each other to do more and more stuff going forward, so we have a healthy spirit of everyone trying to do the best city. The thing that they have control over, they're trying to develop it and make it the most special thing that it can be.

OPS2: The satire of American life has always been of interest to us. It seems like there's a lot of cultural comment there, which hasn't been spoken about a lot. You guys are English and the game is made in Scotland, but obviously there are many Americans involved in the making of the game. As a culture that's known to be so patriotic, do you think the game is perceived differently in the US? And do you think that some of the jokes even go "over their heads"?

DH: The original *GTA* came out from those of us who are now living in New York or based in London, and some of the guys were in Dundee [Scotland] at the time... The original thing was a British perspective about living in America. It still retains that to a great extent but we love our Americans! [laughs]

TD: I think they're happy to laugh with it.

DH: The TV might be a bit stupid here but American's aren't more or less stupid than most people. Giving them something with a different sense of humour isn't something they'll reject. A lot of fan letters and stuff we see on the internet is from Americans who love that stuff. I think they actually get into it.

OPS2: One of the characters [Ryder] looks a lot like Eazy-E from NWA. Was that intentional?

DH: It wasn't fully intentional, but that kind of jerry curl and attitude makes him a great character. It's not meant to be him at all but he just has a strong distinct look - that's all.

OPS2: Los Santos has a lot of rap and hip-hop influences - will there be a lot of West Coast gangsta-style vibe in the game?

DH: No, there's actually not that much rap stuff and that's only this bit of the game anyway. When you're first in the game it seems that the game is all about street life, and then the story kicks you out into another section of the map and it changes totally what it's all about. There is a bit of rap in there, but it's not a rapping game. You don't rap or anything like that. That would be a little cheesy, I think.

OPS2: How will you know when CJ is hungry?

DH: Ummm... It will be signalled to you. We'll make sure that it's something that will feel nice and natural. We're still testing it out and it'll definitely feel nice. For the person who's playing it, it will be very natural... You've got take care of business, but it won't feel like a chore.

OPS2: It seems, once again, that a lot has been added - have you taken anything out?

DH: No, I don't think so.

OPS2: And the radio stations - they've always been one of the major strengths of the game - is that still going to be the case?

DH: I hope so! [laughs] I hope we don't f**k up! We're not really ready to start announcing what the music's going to be just yet because Terry and the guys who do that have an absolute mountain of music to sort out, so again, the volume is enormous. *Vice City* was eight or nine records [per station]. With *GTA3* you went from reggae to opera, and [in *San Andreas*] we'll try and make sure that all aspects of California are there. California is the only place in America that has good radio. We'll try and capture a good range of audio in there.

OPS2: Will the three cities have distinct feels between them?

DH: Yes! Otherwise it's just going to feel like, real suburban. I mean, hopefully we'll be able to get a strong visual look in architecture, but also with lightning and, obviously, gameplay. There's a lot of on-foot stuff at the start of the game in Los Santos. When you go to San Fierro you'll be doing a lot of driving there, and when you go to Las Venturas there's a real playground element to it and whatnot. We'll try and give it a strong visual, character-wise - what the pedestrians look like, how they behave and also the strong difference in activity.

OPS2: What was it that you found that most people wanted in the new *GTA*?

DH: They all wanted us to rework the targeting and I think we've done a great job in doing that, but it will be once people start to play it that we'll find out if they like it! They didn't know what they wanted in terms of cities but with the three cities - LA, San Francisco and Vegas - I'm sure we've made everyone happy. A lot of people wanted swimming. That was definitely appealing to the fans. And they wanted more stuff to do that felt right in the *GTA* world. I haven't seen anything off the internet that I thought was a really good idea or even a credible idea that would even remotely work in the game that we haven't done. Equally, the guys that work on it

are their own biggest critics, and they push stuff really hard. They're always searching for ideas.

OPS2: What are some lessons you've learned from releasing some of your other non-*GTA* games, like *Manhunt*?

DH: Definitely with *Manhunt* we learned two things that will definitely appear on this. It's a different team at Rockstar North but some guys worked on both games. Leslie [Benzies] is a Producer on *GTA* and an Executive Producer on *Manhunt*. We learned how to make the shooting feel visceral. Some of the techniques that we learned from the targeting system have been taken from *Manhunt* and now we've also got sneaking. We've done a lot of work on a sneaking game. I think *Manhunt* has more than that but i do think that it did sneaking very well, so we're definitely taking that over. *Manhunt* was an enormous undertaking audio-wise and we've taken some of that stuff too. Generally as a company, our experience from doing all our games and the previous *GTA* games is naturally going to come into it.

OPS2: Are you able to talk about future plans, like what's in store for the PSP?

DH: We like to focus on one thing at a time! This is the danger with technology, people look three generations ahead and I think one of our strengths is that we really like to handcraft everything. This is a labour of love for a lot of people. We haven't looked that far ahead - partly because I can't see that far in front of me, and partly because of the vast amount of work that there is!

OPS2: If you've had a look around the show floor here at E3 - is there anything in particular that you really like yourselves?

DH: Well, we always like people who are trying to do their own thing and doing what they think is cool and what seems original. I think just from a visual perspective, the new *Metal Gear* looks pretty stunning. They're pushing their own style of gameplay in a really interesting direction. A lot of the other stuff seems like catalogue-filler for people who didn't think of a lot of ideas.

I think E3 is a dreadful place, really, to show stuff. Trying to play something, and with the volume of what's going on and people trying to push you out of the way, it's hard to think of a worse product to be shown in that way than a videogame.

There are two things that we've wanted to do since we started doing Rockstar, and those are games that we thought were well-styled and also games that played well. That was always the most important goal and we've never deviated from that. It's almost like, since people got 3D it seems that gameplay have become less important than it should be in some minds - graphics would hide really weak gameplay.

OPS2: Cheers, guys.

DH: It was great to see you again, man.

Could he be worse than a League player?!

Surely not! It seems that CJ just can't stay away from trouble and sooner of later, his karma (read: enemies) will catch up. Apparently, the game has adapted the notion of "turf wars" into the gameplay of Los Santos. To ensure acceptable levels of accuracy in the microcosm of gangs, Rockstar employs an entire ream of researchers as part of their staff. For San Andreas, the researchers looked into the cultural and social boundaries of LA gangs. Here, CJ has been confronted by a bunch of Ballas. Rival gang members like these, will confront you when you're walking down the street in their territory. It's dependant on how much they dislike you, or what has "gone down" recently, but the chance of attack is usually high.

Carl "Fatty Boombalada" Johnson

Another all-new addition and perhaps the most significant, is the fact that you must ensure that CJ continues to eat in order to survive. There are various places to eat, on of course, will be pizza at none other than Well-Stacked Pizza parlours. Small, or no meals will result in CJ becoming thin - but big meals will see CJ gain weight and his stamina will subsequently suffer. Here, CJ can be seen walking up to the counter at Well-Stacked Pizza to get some food in the mission "Menace". At the counter, different meals, with varying sizes and prices will be offered up. Only interior areas will have (short) load times but they are also more visually impressive than ever before. The pizza parlours are just one of the areas to benefit from the game's new ability to produce real-time reflections.

Stayin' on top, Dawg

With so many companies now trying to clone *Vice City*, it won't take long for rivals and gamers everywhere to realise that *San Andreas* is merely then end-product of Rockstar's ability to be able to "step it up". While there have been admirable attempts, all of them have fallen short. Everyone has a theory as to why Rockstar is so successful, but the answer is simple: they understand the *medium* of games better than anyone else. The result is brilliantly original games, where most others are simply sequels or updated versions of things seen many times before.

"Games are becoming much better storytelling devices but we are very conscious of the fact that we're making a game here, and we used the story to not only drive you through with the narrative but also to unlock features for you in a way that makes sense," says Houser.

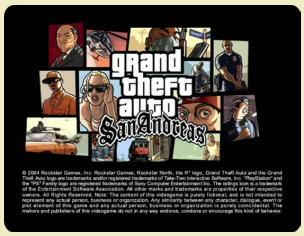
"I guess the overall idea and goal we have for this game is that were not trying to make something that's virtual reality, or that we're aspiring for that. What we're aspiring to is putting you in the middle of your own movie. It's not trying to put you in the middle of your own real world, but it's where you can be both the director and star.

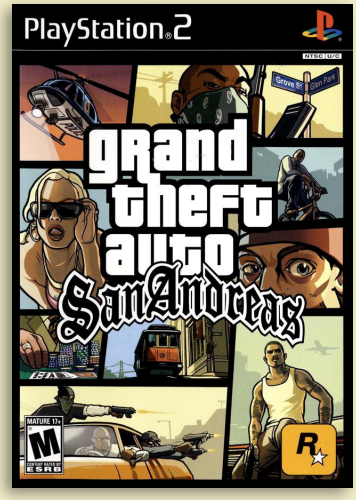
"We really care passionately about games and how they're getting into a position where they're challenging films. They're definitely doing it commercially in terms of the scale of business, but more interestingly they're starting to do it creatively. Books tell you something, films show you something and games let you do something. So intrinsically, that's more engaging for people," he finished.

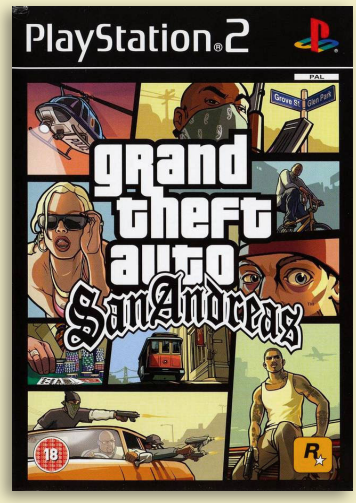
GTA3 was a breath of fresh air. Rising to the challenge of meeting consumers' demands was a proposition of ending in frustrating mediocrity or being Rockstar's greatest-ever triumph. Only the most brilliant of games deserves to earn critical accolades so far prior to release, but *San Andreas* is clearly a phenomenon in the making.

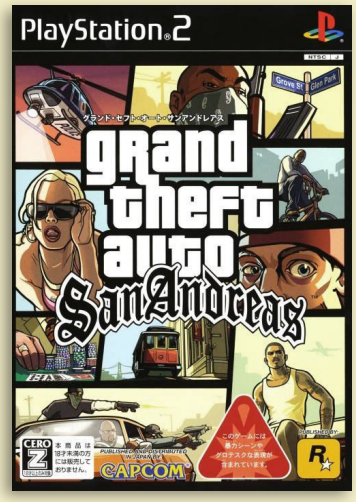
9.5

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas









J N P

Developer	Rockstar North
Publisher	Rockstar Games, (jp) Capcom, (us) SCEA
Release date	(us) October 26, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1-2 Players

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas is the seventh title in the Grand Theft Auto series. The game is set within the fictional U.S. state of San Andreas, which is heavily based on California and Nevada. The state of San Andreas consists of three metropolitan cities: Los Santos, based on Los Angeles; San Fierro, based on San Francisco; and Las Venturas, based on Las Vegas. The single-player story follows Carl "CJ" Johnson, who returns home to Los Santos from Liberty City after his mother's murder. Carl finds his old friends and family in disarray, and over the course of the game he attempts to re-establish his old gang, clashes with corrupt cops, and gradually unravels the truth behind his mother's murder. The plot is based on multiple real-life events in Los Angeles, including the rivalry between the Bloods, Crips, and Hispanic street gangs, the 1980s crack epidemic, the LAPD Rampart scandal, and the 1992 Los Angeles riots.

San Andreas is an action-adventure game with role-playing and stealth elements. Structured similarly to the previous two games in the series, the core gameplay consists of elements in a third-person shooter and a driving game, affording the player a large, open world environment in which to move around. On foot, the player's character is capable of walking, running, sprinting, swimming, climbing and jumping as well as using weapons and various forms of hand-to-hand combat. The player can drive a variety of vehicles, including automobiles, buses, semis, boats, fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, trains, tanks, motorcycles and bikes. The player may also import vehicles in addition to stealing them.

The open, non-linear environment allows the player to explore and choose how they wish to play the game. Although storyline missions are necessary to progress through the game and unlock certain cities and content, they are not required as the player can complete them at their own leisure. When not taking on a storyline mission, the player can freely-roam and look around the cities of San Andreas, eat in restaurants, or cause havoc by attacking people and causing destruction. Creating havoc can attract unwanted and potentially fatal attention from the authorities. The more chaos caused, the stronger the response: police will handle "minor" infractions (attacking pedestrians, pointing guns at people, stealing vehicles, manslaughter, etc.), whereas SWAT teams, the FBI, and the military respond to higher wanted levels.

The player can partake in a variety of optional side missions that can boost their character's attributes or provide another source of income. The traditional side missions of the past games are included, such as dropping off taxi cab passengers, putting out fires, driving injured people to the hospital and fighting crime as a vigilante. New additions include burglary missions, pimping missions, truck and train driving missions requiring the player to make deliveries on time, and driving/flying/boating/biking schools, which help the player learn skills and techniques.

Not all locations are open to the player at the start of the game. Some locales, such as mod garages, restaurants, gyms, and shops, become available only after completing certain missions. Likewise, for the first portion of the game, only Los Santos and its immediate suburbs are available for exploration; unlocking the other cities and rural areas again requires the completion of certain missions. If the player were to travel in locked locations early in the game, they would end up attracting the attention of SWAT teams, police, and police-controlled Hydras if in an aircraft.

Unlike Grand Theft Auto III and Vice City, which needed loading screens when the player moved between different districts of the city, San Andreas has no load times when the player is in transit. The only loading screens in the game are for cutscenes and interiors. Other differences between San Andreas and its predecessors include the switch from single-player to multiplayer Rampage missions (albeit not in the PC version), and the replacement of the 'hidden packages' with spray paint tags, hidden camera shots, horseshoes, and oysters to discover.

The camera, fighting, and targeting controls were reworked to incorporate concepts from another Rockstar game, Manhunt, including various stealth elements, as well as improved target crosshairs and a target health indicator which changes from green to red to black depending on the target's health.

In addition, players can swim and climb walls for the first time in the series. The ability to swim and dive underwater has a great effect on the player as well, since water is no longer an impassable barrier that kills the player (although it is possible to drown). For greater fire-power, the player can also dual wield firearms or perform a drive-by shooting with multiple gang members who can be recruited to follow the player. Due to the size of San Andreas, a waypoint reticle on the HUD map can be set, aiding the player in reaching a destination.

Rockstar has emphasised the personalisation of the main protagonist by adding role-playing elements. Clothing, accessories, haircuts, jewellery, and tattoos are available for purchase by the player, and have more of an effect on non-player characters' reactions than the clothing in Vice City. CJ's level of respect among his fellow recruits and street friends varies according to his appearance and actions, as do his relationships with his girlfriends. The player must ensure CJ eats to stay healthy and exercises properly. The balance of food and physical activity has an effect on his appearance and physical attributes.

San Andreas tracks acquired skills in areas such as driving, fire-

arms handling, stamina, and lung capacity, which improve through use in the game. CJ may learn three different styles of hand-to-hand combat (boxing, kickboxing and kung fu) at the gyms in each of the game's three cities. CJ can speak with a number of pedestrians in the game, responding either negatively or positively. According to Rockstar, there are about 4,200 lines of spoken dialogue for CJ when the cutscenes are excluded.

In total, there are around 250 vehicles in the game compared to approximately 60 in Grand Theft Auto III. New additions include bicycles, a combine harvester, a street sweeper, a jetpack and trailers amongst others. Car physics and features are similar to the Midnight Club series of street racing games, allowing for much more midair vehicle control as well as nitrous upgrades and aesthetic modification.

There are several different classes of vehicles that serve different purposes. Off-road vehicles perform better in rough environments, while racing cars perform better on tracks or on the street. Jets are fast, but usually need a runway to land. Helicopters can land almost anywhere and are much easier to control in the air, but are slower. While previous Grand Theft Auto games had only a few aircraft that were difficult to access and fly, San Andreas has eleven fixed-wing aircraft and nine helicopters and makes them more integral in the game's missions. There is also the ability to skydive from aircraft, using a parachute. Several boats were added, while some were highly modified.

Other new features and changes from previous Grand Theft Auto games include:

Gang wars: Battles with enemy gangs are prompted whenever the player ventures into enemy territory and kills at least three gang members. If the player then survives three waves of enemies, the territory will be won and fellow gang members will begin wandering the streets of these areas. The more territory owned by the player, the more money that will be generated. Occasionally, the player's territory will come under attack from enemy gangs and defeating them will be necessary to retain these areas. Once all marked territories are claimed from one of the two hostile gangs for the protagonist's gang, the opposing gang can no longer attack. Once the player takes control of all the territories, none can come under attack.

Car modification: Most automobiles in the game can be modified and upgraded at various garages. All car mods are strictly visual apart from the stereo system and nitrous oxide upgrade which increases bass and gives the car a speed boost when activated respectively; and hydraulics, which lowers the car's height by default and allows the player to control various aspects of the car's suspension. Other common modifications include paintjobs, rims, body kits, side skirts, bumpers and spoilers.

Burglary: Continuing the series' tradition of controversy, home invasion is included as a potential money-making activity. By stealing a burglary van, CJ is able to sneak into a residence at night, and cart off valuables or shake down the occupants.

Minigames: Numerous minigames are available for play in San Andreas, including basketball, pool, rhythm-based challenges (dancing and 'bouncing' lowriders with hydraulics), and video game machines that pay homage to classic arcade games. In addition, there are the aforementioned casino games and methods of gambling, such as betting on virtual horse races.

Money: The money system

has been expanded upon, compared to previous titles. Players can spend their cash on gambling, clothes, tattoos, meals, etc. Excessive gambling loss can force the player to sink into debt, which is shown in red negative numbers. When the player leaves a safehouse, CJ gets an unexpected call and a mysterious person tells him about his debts. Four gang members suddenly appear and shoot Carl on sight if he does not erase the debt when the mysterious person calls him a second time.

Multiplayer: Rampages have been modified to allow two players to complete them. The players are both shown simultaneously on the screen, meaning they must stay within close proximity of each other. The multiplayer rampages provide such functionality.

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas takes place in 1992 within the state of San Andreas, which is based on sections of California and Nevada. It comprises three major fictional cities: Los Santos corresponds to Los Angeles, San Fierro corresponds to San Francisco, and Las Venturas corresponds to Las Vegas. The environments around these cities are also based on settings within the Southwestern region of the United States. Players can drive up the half-mile (800 m) tall Mount Chiliad (based on Mount Diablo), parachute from various peaks and skyscrapers, and visit 12 rural towns and villages located in five counties: Red County, Flint County, Bone County, Tierra Robada, and Whetstone. Other notable destinations include Sherman Dam (based on the Hoover Dam), a large secret military base called Area 69 (based on Area 51), a large satellite dish (based on a dish from the Very Large Array), Vinewood (based on Hollywood) and the Vinewood sign (based on the Hollywood sign) which is located in Mulholland, and many other geographical features. The bridges in San Fierro are based on the Forth road and rail bridges which link Edinburgh, the home of Rockstar North, to Fife although the road bridge is highly similar to the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge. San Andreas is 13.9 square miles (36 square kilometres), almost four times as large as Vice City and five times as large as the Grand Theft Auto III rendition of Liberty City. The three cities are linked by numerous highways, a train system, and air travel. While its predecessors' areas were limited to urban locations, San Andreas includes not only large cities and suburbs, but also the rural areas between them.

The main character is a member of the Grove Street Families street gang, a set of a gang that also includes the initially-hostile Temple Drive and Seville Boulevard Families. The two main rival gangs are the Ballas and Los Santos Vagos, both based out of Los Santos. The Varrios Los Aztecas also operate in Los Santos. The main gangs of San Fierro are the San Fierro Rifa, led by T-Bone Mendez; the Da Nang Boys, a Vietnamese gang; and the San Fierro Triads, whose leader Wu Zi Mu forms an alliance with Carl. In Las Venturas, the only gangs are the Triads (run by Wu Zi Mu) and the Italian Mafia (consisting of the Forellis, Sindaccos, and Leones). The "Loco Syndicate" appears in the San Fierro mission chain, essentially made up of T-Bone Mendez's Rifa gangsters, Mike Toreno and a pimp Jizzy B. In addition, the Russian Mafia makes a few small appearances in the storyline.

The characters that appear in San Andreas are relatively diverse and relative to the respective cities and locales which each of them based himself in. This allows the game to include a significantly wider array of story lines and settings than in Grand Theft Auto III and Vice City. The player controls Carl "CJ" Johnson (Young Maylay), a young African-American gang member who serves as the game's protagonist.

The Los Santos stages of the game revolve around the theme of the Grove Street Families gang fighting with the Ballas and the Vagos for territory and respect. East Asian gangs (most notably the local Triads), an additional Vietnamese gang (the Da Nang Boys), and a force of Hispanic thugs working for the local "Loco Syndicate" (the San Fierro Rifa) are evident in the San Fierro leg of the game, while three Mafia families and the Triads who all own their respective casino are more prominently featured in the Las Venturas section of the game.

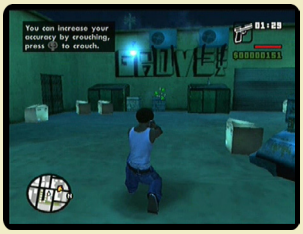
Like the previous two Grand Theft Auto games, the voice actors of San Andreas include notable celebrities, such as David Cross, Andy Dick, Ron Foster, Samuel L. Jackson, James Woods, Peter Fonda, Charlie Murphy, Frank Vincent, Chris Penn, Danny Dyer, Sara Tanaka, William Fichtner, Wil Wheaton, rappers Ice-T, Chuck D, Frost, MC Eiht and The Game and musicians George Clinton, Axl Rose, Sly and Robbie and Shaun Ryder. Young Maylay made his debut as the protagonist, Carl.

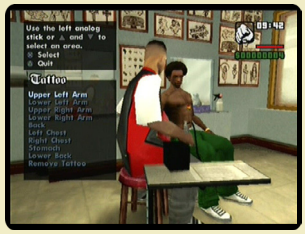
The Guinness World Records 2009 Gamer's Edition lists it as the video game with the largest voice cast, with 861 credited voice actors, including 174 actors and 687 additional performers, many of those performers being fans of the series who wanted to appear on the game.

As with the previous two entries in the Grand Theft Auto series, San Andreas has music taken from the time in which the game is based.

San Andreas is serviced by eleven radio stations; WCTR (talk radio), Master Sounds 98.3 (rare groove, playing many of the old funk and soul tracks sampled by 1990s hip-hop artists), K-Jah West (dub and reggae; modelled after K-Jah from Grand Theft Auto III), CSR (new jack swing, modern soul), Radio X (alternative rock, metal and grunge), Radio Los Santos (gangsta rap), SF-UR (old school Chicago house music), Bounce FM (funk), K-DST (classic rock), K-Rose (country) and Playback FM (classic hip hop).

The music system in San Andreas is enhanced from previous titles. In earlier games in the series, each radio station was essentially a single looped sound file, playing the same songs, announcements and advertisements in the same order each time. In San Andreas, each section is held separately, and "mixed" randomly, allowing songs to be played in different orders, announcements to songs to be different each time, and plot events to be mentioned on the stations. This system would be used in Grand Theft Auto IV. WCTR, rather than featuring licensed music and DJs, features spoken word performances by actors such as Andy Dick performing as talk show hosts and listener callers in a parody of talk radio programming.





Lazlow again plays as himself on the show "Entertaining America" on WCTR in the same persona as in III and Vice City. He takes over after the former presenter, Billy Dexter, is shot on air by in-game film star Jack Howitzer. Lazlow interviews guests such as O.G. Loc, who is one of the four characters Carl encounters during the game that is on the radio, along with Big Smoke, Madd Dogg, and The Truth.

The Xbox, iOS, and Windows versions of the game include an additional radio station that supports custom soundtracks by playing user imported MP3s, allowing players to listen to their own music while playing the game. This feature is not available on the PlayStation 2 version of the game or when played on the Xbox 360.

Upon its release, Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas was met with critical acclaim. It received an average review score of 95/100, according to Metacritic, tying for the fifth-highest ranked game in PlayStation 2 history. IGN rated the game a 9.9/10 (the highest score it has ever awarded to a PlayStation 2 game), calling it *"the defining piece of software"* for the PlayStation 2. GameSpot rated the game 9.6/10, giving it an Editor's Choice award. Jeff Gerstmann said *"San Andreas definitely lives up to the Grand Theft Auto name. In fact, it's arguably the best game in the series"*. San Andreas also received an A rating from the 1UP.com network and a 10/10 score from Official US PlayStation Magazine. Common praises were made about the game's open-endedness, the size of the state of San Andreas, and the engaging storyline and voice acting. Most criticisms of the game stemmed from graphical mishaps, poor character models, and low-resolution textures, as well as various control issues, particularly with auto-aiming at enemies. Some critics commented that while a lot of new content had been added to San Andreas, little of it had been refined or implemented well. Nevertheless, since its release, San Andreas has been regarded to be one of the greatest games of all time, placing at number 27 in Edge's Top 100 Games to Play Today. Edge declared that the game remains *"the ultimate expression of freedom, before next-gen reined it all back in."* In 2015, the game placed 8th on USgamer's The 15 Best Games Since 2000 list.

By 3 March 2005, the game had sold over 12 million units for the PlayStation 2 alone, making it the highest selling game for PlayStation 2. The game received a "Diamond" sales award from the ELSPA, indicating sales of at least 1 million copies in the United Kingdom. The Guinness World Records 2009 Gamer's Edition lists it as the most successful PlayStation 2 game, with 17.33 million copies sold for that console alone, from a total of 21.5 million in all formats. In 2011, Kotaku reported that according to Rockstar Games, Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas has sold 27.5 million copies worldwide.

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas is distributed on Steam. The game received a notable amount of updates raising the version from 1.1 to 3.0. An update caused controversy after 17 tracks from the soundtrack were removed due to expired licenses.

On 12 December 2013, San Andreas was released on select iOS devices. The upgrades and enhancements from the original game include newly remastered graphics, consisting of dynamic and detailed shadows, greater draw distance, an enriched colour palette, plus enhanced character and car models.

San Andreas was criticised by some for its perceived racial stereotyping. Some saw the alleged stereotyping as ironic, while others defended the game, noting that the storyline could speak to people of different backgrounds. A study of how different groups of youths engaged with the game found that *"they do not passively receive the games' images and content"*.

Hot Coffee is a normally inaccessible mini-game in San Andreas. Public awareness of the existence of the mini-game arrived with the release of the Hot Coffee mod, created for the Windows port of San Andreas in 2005. This mod enables access to the mini-game.

Throughout the game, Carl "CJ" Johnson, the game's protagonist, may date up to six girlfriends, carrying out various "date missions" in order to improve his relationship with a particular woman. Once CJ has become particularly close to a girlfriend, or if he has collected all oysters in the game, his girlfriend may end a successful date by inviting him into her house for "coffee," from which CJ may choose to accept or decline. Improving relationships with girlfriends through successful dates and other related activities will eventually reward CJ with new items, such as vehicles and special wardrobes, along with pre-existing gameplay benefits (e.g. dating a nurse grants CJ with free visits to the hospital without losing his weapons after dying).

In the unmodified version of Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas, players see an exterior view of the girlfriend's house while muffled voices of CJ and his girlfriend engaging in sexual intercourse are heard. However, the Hot Coffee mod replaces this with a minigame which allows the player to actually enter the girlfriend's bedroom and control Carl's actions during sex, with the same controls as dancing.

Rockstar Games initially denied allegations that the mini-game was "hidden" in the game, stating that the Hot Coffee modification (which they claim violated the game's End User License Agreement) is the result of *"hackers"* making *"significant technical modifications to and reverse engineering"* the game's code. However, this claim was undermined when a user known as gothi from the website PS2 Save Tools released the "GTA:SA Censor Remover" tool for the PS2 and Xbox versions in June 2005, which allowed the minigame to be accessed on consoles. These new methods of accessing "Hot Coffee" demonstrated that the controversial content was, indeed, built into the console versions as well.

The PC mod itself is only an edited copy of the main game script file ("main.scm") with a single bit changed. The mod was also made possible on the console versions by changing the bit inside a user's saved game file or by using a third-party modding device. Take-Two has stated that the mod constitutes a violation of the End User License Agreement, even though modification of the main.scm file is common within the mod community.

However, the oral sex animations are clearly visible in the background during one scene of the mission "Cleaning the Hood", even in the re-released game. This may explain why the minigame was not simply removed when the decision was made to cut it from the game; its assets were already in use elsewhere.

The revelation of the mini-game sparked a fair amount of controversy around Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas, with some politicians firing harsh words at both the game's developer and the ESRB, the organization which establishes content ratings for video games in North America. It also rekindled the debate over the influence of video games in general with new protests against several other games such as Killer7, The Sims 2, and Bully.

Jack Thompson was one of the first to criticize the game for its hidden content, believing violent media is one of the main causes of

violent crime in America. Thompson lashed out against Rockstar Games on several occasions for previous games they have developed.

U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton suggested that new regulations be put on video games sales. The ESRB conducted an investigation that ultimately changed the game's rating from Mature to Adults Only 18+. Also, Congress passed a resolution to have the Federal Trade Commission investigate whether Rockstar intentionally undermined the ESRB by having the content in the game.

In New York, a class action lawsuit was filed by Florence Cohen, an 85-year-old grandmother who purchased the game for her 14-year-old grandson (according to the old rating of "M", the game is typically considered inappropriate for this age). Cohen's lawsuit claimed that Rockstar Games and Take-Two Interactive, the publisher of the game, are guilty of deception, false advertising, fraud and abuse. The accusation of deception is based on the change from M-rated to AO, meaning according to the lawsuit that the original rating was a deceptive practice.

A protest group known as the Peaceholics organized a protest on August 4, 2005 at Rockstar's headquarters. The group demonstrated against San Andreas as well as the game Bully, the latter due to fears that the content could inspire children to become bullies themselves.

On July 8, 2005, the ESRB announced that it was aware of and opening an investigation into the circumstances surrounding 'Hot Coffee.' The investigation examined *"whether the mod unlocks preexisting code...or is actually a purely third-party creation."*

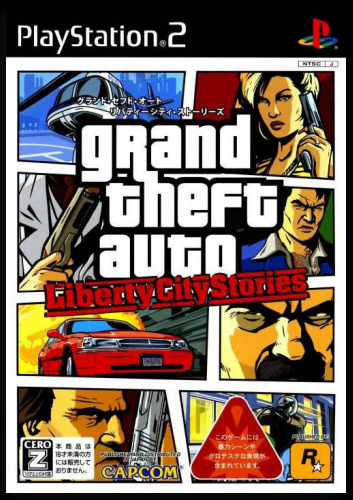
On July 20, 2005, the ESRB announced that it was changing the rating of of GTA:SA from Mature (M) to Adults Only (AO), making this the first and only Grand Theft Auto game to receive an AO Rating. Rockstar stated that it would discontinue manufacturing the current version of the game, and produce a new version that would not include the content that is unlocked by the Hot Coffee mod. In the fourth quarter of 2005, Rockstar released this "clean" version with the "Hot Coffee" scenes removed (Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas 1.01), allowing the rating of the game to be reverted to its original Mature rating.

The day after the rating change, several North American chain stores, and IEMA retailers, which accounted for every major retailer in the United States and approximately 85% of the game's market in the country, removed the PC and console versions of the game from their store shelves, re-stickered the box with the new rating, or returning it to Take-Two Interactive. These included major chains such as GameStop, Sears, Hudson's Bay Company, Zellers, Hollywood Video, Blockbuster, Wal-Mart, Target, Best Buy, and Electronics Boutique. Rockstar gave some retailers ESRB "Adults Only" rating stickers to put on their copies of GTA:SA, should they decide to keep selling the original product.

eBay removed copies of GTA:SA that had been reported by the eBay community. eBay claimed that GTA:SA violated the terms of the eBay seller policy and could not be sold unless it was located in the Everything Else > Mature Audiences section.

As of September 1, 2009, Take Two agreed to settle a securities class action suit related to the controversy over the game and over backdating allegations for just over $20 million.

7.8



J N P

Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories

Developer	Rockstar Leeds
Publisher	Rockstar Games, (jp) Capcom, (us) SCEA
Release date	(us) June 6, 2006
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories, originally released on the PSP, is the ninth game in the Grand Theft Auto series. It is a prequel to Grand Theft Auto III. The game is set in 1998 and center around Toni Cipriani. He have been laying low for a while, but Salvatore Leone requires his services and takes him under his wings. Toni must work his way to the top to become Capo. However, gangsters and other Families stand in his path to the top.

Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories is an action-adventure game set in an open world environment and played from a third-person perspective. Liberty City's layout is largely similar to Grand Theft Auto III, while it also incorporates elements found in Grand Theft Auto III's successors, such as more indoor environments, clothing changes, and motorcycles. In addition, in keeping with recent Grand Theft Auto games, the player has more flexibility in terms of moving the camera around for viewing surroundings (Grand Theft Auto III is noticeably limited in that respect). Things that are omitted from the game are the ability to climb and the ability to swim – contact with deep bodies of water is instantly fatal. The overall game's open world, as it is based upon the original Liberty City layout, is considerably smaller than that of San Andreas.

Differently from GTA III, motorcycles are usable in the game. Though flyable aeroplanes and helicopters can be found in Vice City and San Andreas, flyable aeroplanes cannot be found in Liberty City Stories, and helicopters are only accessible through certain exploits.

As stated in an IGN preview, *"Rockstar dropped Renderware in favor of a brand new in-house engine to best utilize the resolution, texture density and particle effects of the PSP"*. Until the release of Liberty City Stories, RenderWare had been the game engine behind every 3D game in the Grand Theft Auto III era.

The PS2 port was criticised for lacking improvement and removing certain features from the PSP version.

7.5

J N P

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories

Developer	Rockstar Leeds
Publisher	Rockstar Games, (jp) Capcom, (us) SCEA
Release date	Action-adventure
Genre	(us) March 5, 2007
Mode	1 Player

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories, originally released on the PSP, is the tenth instalment in the series and the sixth and last game in the 3D universe. This was also the last game in the series to use well-known and Hollywood voice talent; Grand Theft Auto IV onward would instead use lesser-known and unknown voice actors. It is a prequel to Grand Theft Auto: Vice City and the successor to previous PSP release, Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories. Vice City is a representation of Miami, Florida. The game is centered around Victor "Vic" Vance who's kicked out of the army. He precedes to rise through the ranks of multiple gangs in the glamourous and dangerous Vice City in the mid 1980's.

Vice City Stories is an action-adventure game set in an open world environment and played from a third-person perspective, structured similarly to other releases from the Grand Theft Auto series. The core gameplay consists of elements of a third-person shooter and a driving game, affording the player a large environment in which to move around. On foot, the player's character is capable of walking, running, swimming, jumping, as well as using weapons and basic hand-to-hand combat. The player can drive a variety of vehicles, including automobiles, boats, planes, helicopters, jetskis and motorcycles.

The open, non-linear environment allows the player to explore and choose how they wish to play the game. Although storyline missions are necessary to progress through the game and unlock certain areas and content, they are not required, as the player can complete them at their own leisure. When not taking on a storyline mission, the player can freely roam game's world. The player can also partake in a variety of optional side missions. The traditional side missions of the past games are included, but have been moderately upgraded and enhanced compared to previous titles. A new addition to the game is "Beach Patrol", in which Victor must deal with bikers on the beach by beach buggy (by ramming or shooting to knock them off their bikes) or throwing life preservers to drowning swimmers by boat or by taking a paramedic around to injured people on the beach.

One of the key gameplay elements in Vice City Stories is "empire-building". New to the Grand Theft Auto series, it borrows a few ideas from Vice City's "properties" and San Andreas' "gang wars" systems. To make money, the player must open and operate various businesses on property taken over from enemy gangs – these can range from protection rackets to brothels or smuggling compounds; the type and scale of a business is entirely dependent on the player's wants. For Vice City Stories, the combat system was overhauled. The targeting mechanism has been tweaked to "intelligently target"; enemies posing a threat or attacking the player will be targeted over pedestrians. The biggest changes concern the hand-to-hand combat system, as the player can now perform grappling moves and throws,

and stand on top of enemies lying on the ground. The player is able to bribe policemen or hospital staff when "Wasted" (killed) or "Busted" (arrested) to lower their wanted level, and keep weapons that ordinarily would have been lost.

The standard hidden package system returns in the form of 99 red balloons scattered around the city. This is a reference to Nena's 1984 hit "99 Luftballons", which was featured in Vice City. Improvements to the graphics since the release of Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories include new animations, faster load times, a longer draw distance, reductions in clumping of pedestrians and vehicles, more complex explosions, and increases in the density of objects, vehicles, and NPCs.

Like the game's predecessor, the PSP version of Vice City Stories features a multiplayer mode, for up to 6 players through WiFi ad-hoc mode (local area). The game features 10 different modes of wireless multiplayer gaming, which incorporate the use of automobiles, aircraft, and water-based vehicles. Various pedestrian and character models from the single player mode are available as player avatars. These multiplayer modes are not included in the PS2 version.

Like previous Grand Theft Auto games, Vice City Stories features notable voice actors. Gary Busey, Luis Guzmán, Philip Michael Thomas, and Danny Trejo reprise their roles as Phil Cassidy, Ricardo Diaz, Lance Vance, and Umberto Robina, respectively, which they previously played in Grand Theft Auto: Vice City. Phil Collins makes a cameo as himself, making him the first famed musician to ever appear in a Grand Theft Auto as a virtual representation with a character model, with his song "In the Air Tonight" in the game's soundtrack, including an on-screen performance of the song by the animated version. Phil Collins was played by Joseph Martignette during the in concert scene. His songs like "Easy Lover" with Phillip Bailey and "Turn It On Again" with Genesis also appear on the soundtrack. Also, Opie and Anthony, as well as several crew members of The Opie and Anthony Show were recorded and used as voices of several minor characters.

In addition to the gangs previously featured in Vice City, new gangs make a debut in this game: the Trailer Park Mafia, the Cholos, the Stallionz, and the Mendez Brothers. Also, it explores the Vance Crime family, that was introduced in the original game, in more detail.

On 7 February 2007 Rockstar Games confirmed that the PlayStation 2 version of the game would be an almost straight port. The port has improvements such as enhanced graphics (including the addition of bloom effects, enabled via a "trails" option), draw distance, and performance as expected, but also includes a few new side activities that were not in the PSP release such as five new odd jobs, six additional unique jumps, five more rampages, and a new easter egg.

While other Grand Theft Auto ports have had extra features added (such as replays or custom soundtracks), this is the first port of any Grand Theft Auto game to include extra in-game content.

Vice City Stories has received "generally favorable" reviews from critics, according to Metacritic.

The PS2 port of the game was criticised for having the same coding as the PSP version and for fixing very few issues and removing some things, but was praised for better lighting. As of 26 March 2008, Vice City Stories has sold 4.5 million copies according to Take-Two Interactive.

7.1

J N P

Grandia II

Developer	Game Arts
Publisher	Ubisoft, (jp) Enix Corporation, Game Arts
Release date	(jp) February 21, 2002
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Grandia II is a role-playing video originally released for the Dreamcast as part of their Grandia series. The game was later ported to the PlayStation 2, where it was released worldwide throughout 2002, and later for Windows exclusively in North America and Europe later that year. An enhanced port, based upon the Dreamcast version and entitled Grandia II Anniversary Edition was released on August 24, 2015 on Steam and GOG.com.

The game is set in a fantasy world thousands of years after a battle between Granas, the god of light, and Valmar, the god of darkness, nearly destroyed the planet until Valmar was split into pieces and scattered across the land. In the aftermath of the battle, the Church of Granas has led humanity to prosperity by spreading the word of good, but when a young mercenary named Ryudo is charged to protect a songstress from the church named Elena, their journey reveals that the church's history, as well as the history of the world, is not all it seems.

Grandia II sports a unique battle system. Apart from running its turn-based battle system in real time, similarly to the Final Fantasy series, the game supports limited movement during battle. Characters can run around or strike opponents and then retreat. Dependent on the timing, a playable character or enemy can "cancel" an opponent's move. The battle system uses Initiative Points, Magic Points, Hit Points and Special Points. A combo attack allows a character to land two hits on an enemy. The hits can be increased with certain accessories, up to four hits per combo. A combo attack can also "counter" if it hits an enemy in an attack pose, dealing additional damage. Additionally, if the combo kills the intended target before reaching the final blow, the character will attack the closest enemy to complete the combo. Characters can use magic from equipped Mana Eggs. Using magic consumes MP. More powerful magic takes longer to cast. Special moves and spells can be learned with Skills Coins and Magic Coins, and have a maximum level of 5. Spell efficiency is increased and casting time decreased as the level increases. Magic spells can cast instantly if a character has skills equipped giving a +100% bonus to the element of that particular spell. Special move sets are learned from Skill Books, then equipped onto characters. Skills can either boost stats or add additional effects, such as increased item drops or adding a cancel effect to certain spells.

The game was developed by many of the same staff members who worked on the original Grandia, including music composer Noriyuki Iwadare but was designed around the idea of creating a more "mature" product than the previous title, as well as the first in the series to feature fully three-dimensional graphics.

Grandia II was ported to PlayStation 2 and PC after its initial release on Dreamcast. In the PlayStation 2 version, some of the textures and characters are less graphically detailed than on the Dreamcast version. Also, there is a tendency for graphical glitches and slow down

to occur in areas with heavy graphic data. For instance, when a party member defeats the last enemy standing while using the Warp effect of weapon or accessory, the character's color scheme vanishes and only a bright white model is left.

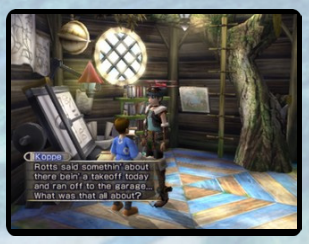
The original Dreamcast release of Grandia II received a largely positive response during its initial release in Japan, earning a 9.75 out of 10 rating from Dreamcast Magazine, as well as a 35 out of 40 from Weekly Famitsu, which earned it the magazine's editor's choice Platinum award.

The PlayStation 2 re-release of Grandia II in 2002 experienced lower sales than the Dreamcast version in Japan despite a higher install base, selling approximately 42,060 copies in its first month. In North America and Europe, the game received mostly lower reviews than the original, with many publications remarking on the technical shortcomings of the port to the new console. Electronic Gaming Monthly found the PlayStation version to be vastly inferior to the original, citing reduced frame rate, color, and texture quality, adding that its *"Inexplicably horrible graphics completely ruin an otherwise splendid title."* Some reviewers such as GamePro found the conversion shortcomings to be largely negligible, claim the original and that it was still *"well worth playing"*.

Grandia III

7.7

Developer	Game Arts
Publisher	Square Enix, (jp) Game Arts
Release date	(jp) August 4, 2005
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player



Grandia III is the first main series Grandia title to not be released in Europe. Set in a fantasy world where technology has allowed man to fly in magic-powered aircraft, a boy named Yuki is determined to become a great pilot like his idol, the Sky Captain Schmidt. When he and his mother encounter a girl named Alfina who has the ability to communicate with the spiritual guardians of the world, they become involved in the plot to discover the secrets of the world's past and face an evil rogue guardian named Xorn.

The player controls Yuki and his companions through a fully 3D world, fighting their way through obstacles using a battle system in the same style as the other Grandia games, with some slight tweaks. Throughout the game Yuki enlists the aide of various characters and creatures called the Guardians to aid him on his journey. Rather than walking across a world map to travel between areas in this game, the player flies a plane, with further landing points becoming available as the story is progressed.

Battles are similar to those of the previous Grandia games. It uses the same basic combat system, where both time and distance play into the execution of actions.

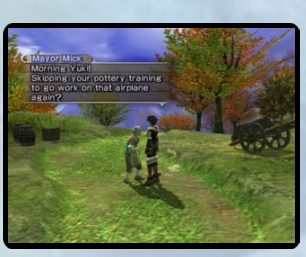
Icons representing all characters and enemies on the field begin an encounter on a point on the dial depending on whether the enemy party or the player party was running away from the other prior to the encounter, and progress along the circle at their own rates. Once the icon reaches the Command point of the dial, the game pauses to allow the player (or computer, if the icon is an enemy's) gives that character a command. The icon then enters the red area of the gauge. Spells, skills and criticals progress more slowly during this period than combos. When the icon reaches the ACT point in the gauge, the command is carried out, and the icon is sent back to the start, where the cycle continues. Characters on the field have two standard attacks: combos and criticals. With combos, the character will swing/stab/shoot the enemy a number of times as per their weapon's use and any applicable skills. They do more damage overall than Criticals, whose purpose is to knock the position of an enemy on the Turn Dial backwards. If a combo is performed upon an airborne enemy, then a special Aerial attack is done. If an enemy is defeated with an Aerial Finish, the monster may drop more valuable items.

Grandia III was first announced in a March 2005 issue of Japanese Weekly Famitsu magazine, which revealed that Game Arts and Square Enix would be bringing the game to the PlayStation 2 console like the previous installment, Grandia Xtreme. The project was headed by director Hidenobu Takahashi, who previously served as art director for Grandia II, and stated that the game would follow the series' themes of "adventure, drama and dreams", and would continue in the direction of taking the series to a more "adult" sensibility while still retaining an overall optimistic tone. Character design for the game

was provided by You Yoshinari with Takahiro Hasebe serving as scenario writer, both of whom had worked on the original Grandia. CGI movie cutscenes were placed in the game help advance the story, which were produced by Mikitaka Kurasawa who had also worked with Capcom on Onimusha. According to a Square Enix representative, the amount of cutscenes in the game are roughly equal in length to three movies. Combat in Grandia III was designed to be a variation of the system seen in previous games in the series, and was described by Takahashi as being *"very complex but very easy to learn"*, adding that *"The combination of the story, fast-paced battle system and beautiful environment will prove to be an extremely enjoyable adventure."* An official website was launched for the game in April 2005, which detailed the game's final release date the following August, as well as offered updates on the game's mechanics and characters.

The music of Grandia III was composed by series veteran Noriyuki Iwadare, who contributed the soundtracks to all previous Grandia titles. Grandia III also features the theme song "In the Sky" performed by Japanese pop/rock singer Miz, which is featured in the game's opening demo, and was released as a single one day before the game in both regular and limited editions by Victor Entertainment. Players who pre-ordered the game in Japan could also received a special promotional album featuring three songs from the game recorded live by the game's music staff, including the vocal theme "To the Moon" performed by Kaori Kawasumi.

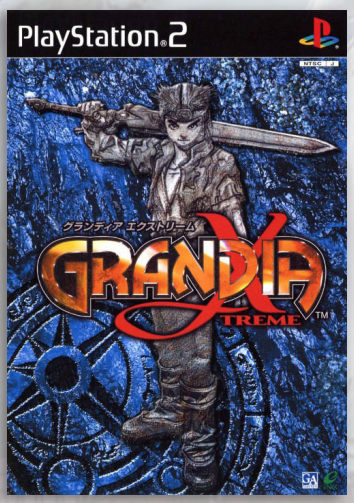
Grandia III was met with a fairly positive response in Japan, debuting as the second highest-selling game of its week of release with 122,000 copies sold, and would go on to sell approximately 233,866 copies by the end of 2005. The game received a 35 out of 40 score from Weekly Famitsu Magazine, earning it an editor's choice Platinum distinction.



The game's reception in North America was generally positive. It received an aggregate score of 78.60% on GameRankings and 77/100 on Metacritic. Many publications praised the game's battle system, with Electronic Gaming Monthly stating that *"Grandia's semi-real-time battles are superb, offering just the right balance of strategy and visual flair, and the new aerial combos are a blast,"* but found the game's plot to be *"fairly linear"*. GamePro similarly called the game's combat *"intriguing"*, yet deemed the game's story to be *"more clichéd and campy than epic and amazing ... The characters all fall into conveniently familiar categories and fail to attract any serious interest in their concerns or circumstances"* GameSpot found the game's short length and lack of sidequests to be its low points, yet ultimately declared that *"While not as stuffed with features and extra content as some of the other RPGs currently available, Grandia III still delivers an interesting (if traditional) story, fun characters, and a versatile, strategy-based battle system."* 1UP.com declared that the game's story, pacing, and character development felt disjointed from one disc to another, stating that *"I almost feel like I'm reviewing two games -- the first disc, which is awesome, and the second, which is ho-hum."* In an article for The New York Times, game critic Charles Herold called the game's battle system *"arguably the greatest combat system of any turn-based role-playing game in existence"* but found the rest of the game to be largely average, remarking that it *"falls short of true greatness, not because it does anything glaringly wrong but because it doesn't do quite enough things right."*

Grandia Xtreme

6.8



Limited Edition

J N

Developer	Game Arts
Publisher	Enix Corporation, (jp) Game Arts (JP)
Release date	(jp) January 31, 2002
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Grandia Xtreme is a side story in the Grandia series and the first Grandia game to be originally released for Playstation 2.

The world of Grandia Xtreme is populated by three races: the militaristic and resourceful Humans; the pointy-eared Arcadians characterized by their magic; and the tribal, beast-like Hazmans. At the beginning of the game, the three races have co-existed in an uneasy alliance for several years, but a natural disaster known as the "Elemental Disorder" occurs and threatens them. In response, the Humans focus their Nortis Army into researching the cause of the disturbances. Representatives from the other races gather to help but tensions and distrust arise along with the possibility of the disasters having been created artificially.

The player takes on the role of Evann, a young ranger, voiced by Dean Cain, who can activate the technology present in certain ruins of the world. He has trained himself to use a sword after his father's death, but has not developed a proper work ethic. Evann is thrown into a series of events that will lead him to discover the cause of the Elemental Disorder, the military's real intentions, and hidden truths behind the ruins.

Grandia Xtreme plays very similarly to the rest of the games in the Grandia series, which all resemble a traditional role-playing video game with somewhat random battles that occur within dungeons or during scripted situations. Combat takes place on a three-dimensional battlefield where the characters move around, striking enemies as they get near them. Very similar in both style and execution to Grandia II's battle system, with the notable exception being that the Battle Gauge, formerly stylized as a horizontal line, is now a circle that the character icons move along clockwise. Each icon represents a character or enemy currently in battle, and they move along it at a rate which corresponds to their "speed" rating. Once an icon reaches the top of the circle, they are allowed to either attack, use items, defend, or flee the battle.

Players are able to progress in the game by going through various dungeons and completing a number of puzzle-based problems. Instead of saving the progress using the recurrent rainbow-colored save points, a few "Geo Gates" are to be located, which transport the player back to the city - the only place with a save point in the armory. Some gates are one-way, and can only be used to return to Locca not leaving an opportunity to return. After using these gates, players are required to begin the dungeon again.

A new installment in the Grandia series developed by Game Arts was officially announced on June 1, 2001 with the tentative name of Grandia X. The game, later retitled Grandia Xtreme, was to be published by Enix as they had just invested capital in Game Arts for a total of ¥99.2 million, or 15% of the company. The game was the first title Game Arts developed exclusively for the PlayStation 2. While previous installments in the series were tra-

ditional role-playing games, the developers took the new title in a different direction and designed it more as an action role-playing game or dungeon crawler to make it more accessible to casual gamers. They nevertheless kept and enhanced mainstays such as the combat and magic systems, as well as the "enchantment" aspect of the story. To design the characters of the game, Enix and Game Arts selected Kamui Fujiwara, the character designer of Terranigma. Development for the game spanned roughly 18 months.

An "aggressive" marketing campaign was planned to push the game and the series as a "brand for the future, not a one shot deal". Grandia Xtreme was showcased with a trailer at the Tokyo Game Show in August 2001 and in playable form at the World Hobby Fair of Tokyo in January 2002. A video of the game was also featured in an issue of Famitsu Game Wave DVD. The game was released in Japan on January 31, 2002 in either regular or limited edition, the latter including as bonuses a Grandia Xtreme pocket watch and a small "Geo Gate" diorama depicting the protagonist Evann. Customers who pre-ordered the game also received a Grandia miniature tote bag.

The voice acting for the English-language version was directed by WorldLink Technologies in Seattle, Washington, with large involvement from Enix America. Mark Hamill voiced the antagonist Colonel Kroitz, while Dean Cain did Evann and Lisa Loeb did Lutina. Enix America partnered with Versus Books to publish a strategy guide of the game and *"expan[d] awareness of the franchise"*. The company also partnered with gaming website RPGFan for a quiz contest to win free copies of the game and strategy guide.

The score of the game was composed by Noriyuki Iwadare in about half a year, with a focus on battle and dungeon music and an overall theme of friendship. The composer used the looped streaming ADX format as in previous Grandia titles and had no technical issues working with the PlayStation 2 hardware. However, he was perplexed at first due to not being specialized in the militaristic aspects of the game's plot; in particular, he had difficulties completing the opening "Theme of Xtreme", and could not find any inspiration for it for two months. After getting advice from one of the development staff member and realizing the game is *"still 'Grandia', after all"*, Iwadare managed to compose the track. He tried to imbue it with a feeling of camaraderie and to make it a *"song of support for everyone who [would hear] it"*. The track "Quan Li" was composed with the same melodic motif as the ending theme, but with the sharp note omitted to musically convey the wrongness associated with *"causing pain and spilling blood in the name of a Holy War"*, as witnessed in the plot of the game. Iwadare felt that giving people the chance to contemplate this was what he was most proud of concerning the score. The ending theme was further based on the feeling of love for mankind.

The soundtrack for the game was published in Japan by Two Five Records on March 1, 2002. In place of the game's ending theme, the album features its vocal arrangement, "Rein-car-nation", sung in Japanese by Kaori Kawasumi. One of the battle themes of the game, "Combat 2", was not included on the album as Iwadare thought it was not one of his favorites and felt it was not perfect. He stated that if a second volume of the album is ever released, he would agree to include the track.

Grandia Xtreme received mixed reviews from critics. It received a score of 71.12% on GameRankings and 68/100 on Metacritic.

2.4

Gravity Games Bike: Street Vert Dirt

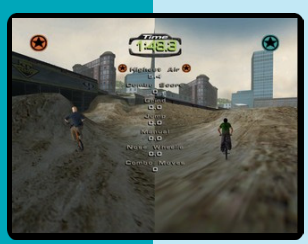
Developer	Midway
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) June 27, 2002
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

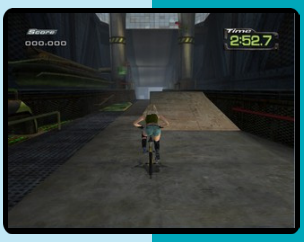
Gravity Games Bike is a BMX game, and features gameplay similar to that of the Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX games. It features 21 characters and 10 levels. The player controls a BMX biker, and is required to complete various goals within levels to unlock later courses. As the player performs tricks, they gain more points and fulfill requirements in the game. The control scheme is similar to that of the Dave Mirra games in that one button on the controller is used to perform tricks, and another is used to modify the trick once it's performed. Unlike other similar games, Gravity Games Bike rewards the same amount of points for performing the same trick repeatedly. The game has several different multiplayer modes.

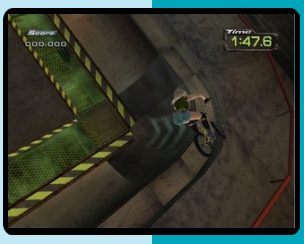
Midway announced a partnership with EMAP USA on January 18, 2000, giving them the rights to the Gravity Games license. It began development under the title Gravity Games: Bike and was the first game developed under the license. The name of the game changed to Gravity Games Bike: Street Vert Dirt by August 2001, and IGN noted the game's fluid trick system in one of its initial builds. IGN's Douglass Perry noted Midway's attention to detailed level design in a preview for the game. IGN's Chris Carle previewed the game at E3 2002 and praised the game's level design but criticized the graphics and the slow-moving pace of the game.

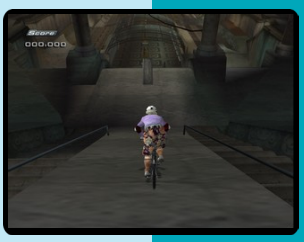
The game were panned by critics, and are notable for its negative reception. The GameCube version of the game was canceled due to lower than expected sales for all Midway games, though GameSpot's Jeff Gerstmann attributed the cancellation to its negative reception. The game received the "Worst Game of the Year" award from GameSpot for both its Xbox and PlayStation 2 versions.

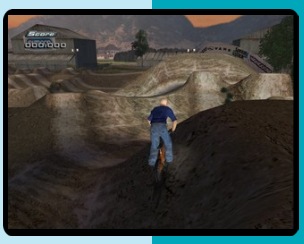
It received a 24% and a 37% from Metacritic and GameRankings respectively. GameSpy's Miguel Lopez criticized the unresponsive controls, collision detection, and sound design, stating *"... Dirt has ...a propensity to live up to its name."*

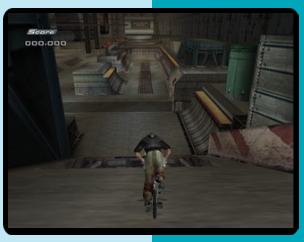






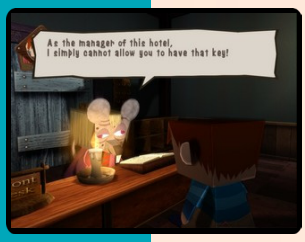






Gregory Horror Show

7.7



Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	(jp) August 7, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Gregory Horror Show, known as Gregory Horror Show: Soul Collector in Japan, is a survival horror based on the CGI anime series of the same name. The game was published by Capcom in Japan and Europe, but was not released in North America. The game was principally developed by Capcom Studio 3, which also produced Clock Tower 3 in tandem with Sunsoft.

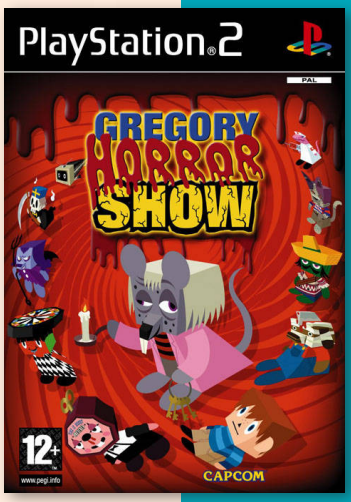
After getting trapped in the Gregory House hotel, the protagonist makes a deal with Death. He will help the player to escape. In return, he wants the player to find 12 lost souls which are kept by residents of Gregory House.

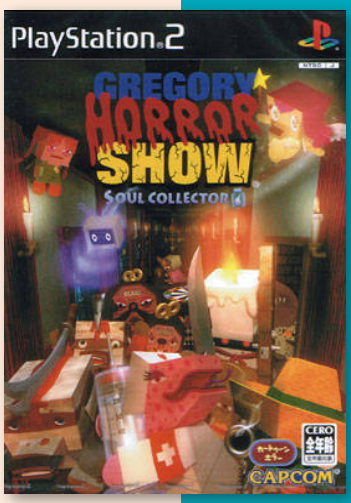
Players must navigate the hotel, retrieving the bottled souls which the hotel guests have been carrying. Neko Zombie, a heavily stitched cat who has become imprisoned in his room, introduces players to the control scheme and methods of spying on guests and stealing the souls back. Spying through keyholes allows players to eavesdrop useful information from guests, as well as scout ahead before plunging into a room and coming face-to-face with guests.

Guests will usually flee if they see the player character, while they still possess a bottled soul. Once the player has recovered the soul from that particular guest, instead of fleeing they will chase and attack the player, reclaiming the soul should the player still be holding it. The guests can all run faster than the player's character, making stealth an important aspect of play. It is possible to hide in wardrobes, but this must be achieved while any pursuing guests are out of sight.

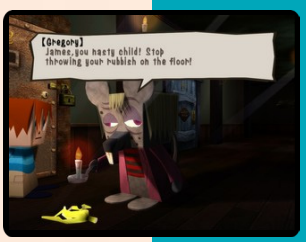
As play progresses and souls are collected, more guests check-in the hotel and more hotel rooms and areas become available for exploration. This is in addition to the guests who have already been relieved of their soul bottles - these prowl the corridors of the hotel, looking for the player, making it increasingly difficult to travel from one location to another without being seen.

The PAL release is seen by collectors as a rare and is an expensive game on the second market.





J P



8.0

Green Green: Kane no Oto Dynamic

Developer	Groover 2001
Publisher	Well Made
Release date	(jp) April 24, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

J

Originally released for Windows as an adult visual novel, the PS2 port of the game was split into two games, each focusing on a different aspect of the story.

Kanenone Dynamic focuses on the “hyper” part of the game. Two new heroines were added. In addition, new artwork, new closing songs and a built-in CG gallery were included.

Green Green: Kane no Oto Romantic

7.5

Developer	Groover 2001
Publisher	Well Made
Release date	(jp) April 24, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

This game focuses on romantic part of the story which takes place at the Kanenone campus, an isolated boarding school in Japan's countryside. The school is entirely comprised of male students, and the protagonist, as well as his friends, are questioning their daily life without a presence of other girls to interact with. That changes when a bus full of girls arrives at the campus one day.

Gretzky NHL 2005

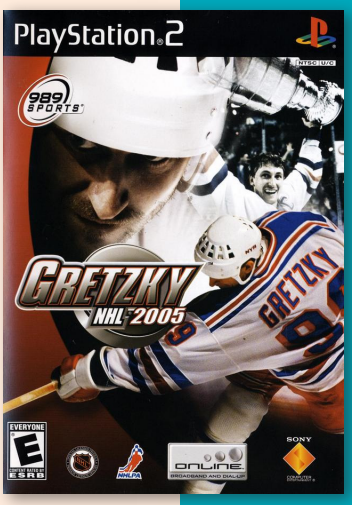
6.6

N

Developer	Page 44 Studios
Publisher	SCEA
Release date	(us) November 9, 2004
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

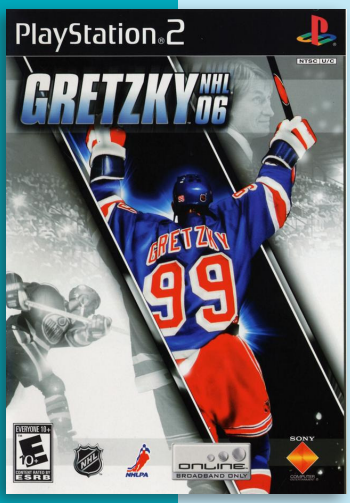
Gretzky NHL 2005 is an ice hockey game featuring professional NHL hockey player Wayne Gretzky. Mike Emrick provides commentary for the game.

Players can play a quick game in either Quick Start or Exhibition Mode, act as owners in Season Mode, or compete against other players in the multiplayer mode.



Gretzky NHL ‘06

6.2



Developer	Page 44 Studios
Publisher	SCEA
Release date	(us) September 20, 2005
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

Gretzky NHL 06 featurie the obligatory roster updates and games modes, exhibition, season mode and a new feature called “99 mode”. In “99 mode” the player can sign Wayne Gretzky as a free agent for any team they play for, filling up a meter during the game, once it is full they can activate “99 mode” and bring Gretzky into the game. The action is more arcade-styled gameplay as to the traditional simulation games on the market.

N

Guardian Angel

J

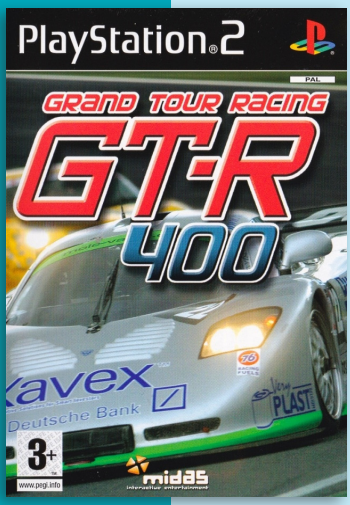
Developer	Vridge
Publisher	Datam Polystar
Release date	(jp) February 27, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Through six episodes of anime interactive drama and antics, players provide guidance as a guardian angel who helps a hapless maiden named Estel and her friends. Since the players are but a guardian angel, they cannot affect things physically but they may influence others into doing their whim in order to help the young charges.

“psxdatacenter.com”

GT-R 400

5.6



Developer Kuju Entertainment
Publisher Midas Interactive Entertainment
Release date (eu) June 25, 2004
Genre Racing
Mode 1-2 Players

GT-R 400 is a touring car racing game. It features two kinds of car types: production models and GT models. The races takes place on closed circuit tracks and the cars are entirely controlled from a third-person perspective. The driving experience can be customized with a number of gameplay options such as car damage, driving aids and automatic gears. Two licensed cars are available, the Ascari KZ1 and the Mosler MT900. Sixteen tracks are available and they cover three continents.

A number of game modes are available. The quick race mode is for players that want go straight to the action on the circuit. It's available for one or two players in split-screen multiplayer. The championship mode allows the player to complete in three different championships for each car type. Each championship consists of a number of races and in each race the player has to finish among the top three to qualify for the next race. Three retries are available for each championship. When all are used the player has to restart from the beginning. The time trial mode is about beating a specific time limit that is set before the race. The game offers 15 time trials for the player to unlock. When both these and all championship modes have been completed, a 16th time trial becomes available. Beating it unlocks a secret supercar.

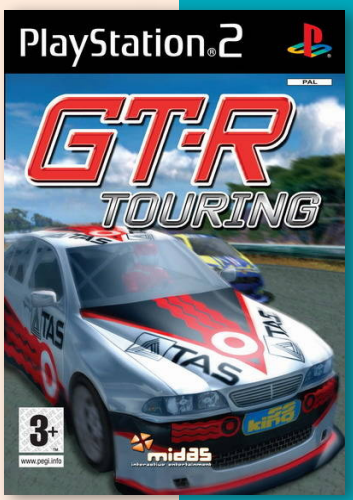
P

GT-R Touring

Developer Kuju Entertainment
Publisher Midas Interactive Entertainment
Release date (eu) October 11, 2006
Genre Racing
Mode 1-2 Players

GT-R Touring feature 28 circuits, car crushing, deformable vehicles, variable weather conditions. 6 championships and 16 time trials.

Players can unlock cars by winning championship and beating time trial. The game include 36 cars, from Hot-Hatches to GT style saloons. Players can also unlock tracks by completing race on championship.



P

GriMgRiMoiRe

7.9

JNP

Developer	Vanillaware
Publisher	Nippon Ichi Softwar, (us) NIS America, (eu) Koei
Release date	(jp) April 12, 2007
Genre	Real-time strategy
Mode	1 Player

GrimGrimoire is a real-time strategy game developed by Vanillaware. Set in the Tower of Silver Star magical school, the player guides protagonist Lillet Blan as she repeatedly experiences the first five days of her tenure, learning the school's secrets and the power behind her journey. The player commands familiars stemming from four different magical disciplines, completing story and bonus missions by completing preset tasks within each level.

Lillet appears onscreen as a cursor which is used to guide troops around the field. Units known as familiars are created by placing summoning circles called runes on the map. Mana can be spent to upgrade the Runes in each fight. New runes and familiars are found as Lillet collects and studies the grimoires. Resource gatherers take the form of elves and other small creatures who harvest mana from crystals. Unexplored areas of the tower are shrouded in a fog of war. There are a number of ways to select individual or multiple units. The game consists of a story mode and a series of bonus maps that are unlocked upon completing the story mode for the first time. The game's plot is presented through cut scenes with large, animated character portraits. Only the familiars are under the player's direct control.

There are four different magic schools with a rock-paper-scissors arrangement of strengths and weaknesses among the schools. Glamour summons fae-type creatures such as elves, fairies, and unicorns. Glamour is strong against necromancy and weak against alchemy. Necromancy summons undead units, which are astral and cannot be affected by most physical attacks. However, they are weak against magic. Necromancy is strong against Sorcery and weak against Glamour. Sorcery are units which are demonic in nature and have high hit points. Sorcery is strong against Alchemy and weak against Necromancy. Alchemy units specialize and have fierce ranged attacks. They are strong against Glamour and weak against Sorcery.

Vanillaware was established by George Kamitani along with a small group to develop Odin Sphere, an action role-playing game that acted as a successor to Princess Crown, an earlier project by Kamitani for the Sega Saturn. While development on Odin Sphere was ongoing, Nippon Ichi Software heard that the Princess Crown team had formed their own studio. Interested in working with them, the then-president of Nippon Ichi Software, Sohei Shinkawa, contacted Vanillaware. Shinkawa later said he *"fell in love"* with Kamitani's artwork, prompting the initial inquiries. Shinkawa said he wanted to collaborate on a game, and that Vanillaware could make whatever they liked. Due to this, the team did not restrain themselves, not considering long-term commercial issues with whatever project they might create. Kamitani was a fan and avid player of the real-time strategy game StarCraft, and as most of the staff at Vanillaware shared his passion, they decided to create a fan-

tasy-themed side-scrolling RTS. Kamitani later said his state of excitement over the project led to many of the decisions abound the story, deriving thematic cues from the universes of Atelier Marie: The Alchemist of Salburg and the Harry Potter series. Time and budget contraints lead to the number of characters being kept very low, and as a result a repeating timeloop was incorporated into the story. Due to the staff's familiarity with StarCraft, the gameplay was designed very quickly, but as Japanese gamers were not used to the RTS genre, they had to lower the difficulty and make the game user-friendly to genre newcomers.

The initial character concepts were created by Kamitani, while the character designs were handled by Koichi Kozo. Like Odin Sphere, Vanillaware used 2D rather than 3D graphics that were dominating the game industry: Kamitani wanted GrimGrimoire and Odin Sphere to be the new leading edge for 2D art design. The scale and quality of the designs was severely limited by time constraints. A notable part of the collaboration was the character Lujie Piche, who also appeared in Nippon Ichi Software's Soul Nomad & the World Eaters. Lujie was originally designed for use in GrimGrimoire, but she appealed to staff at Nippon Ichi Software, who thought the character would be a good fit with the visuals and style of Soul Nomad. According to differing estimates by Kamitani, the project took between six months and a year to complete. While GrimGrimoire was the second Vanillaware project after Odin Sphere, it was the first to release due to being completed in a shorter timespan, ultimately securing a release date a month before the scheduled release of GrimGrimoire. Kamitani later stated that GrimGrimoire was the only project he ever designed with the intent of creating a sequel,

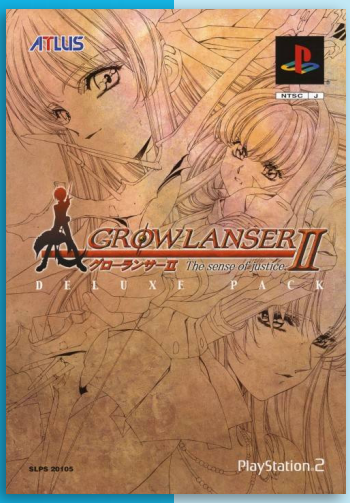
and despite wishes to do so, Nippon Ichi Software did not put in any requests. Based on this, Kamitani has since made sure to write stories that would stand on their own.

GrimGrimoire was well received by the gaming press. It received an average rating of 78% at GameRankings and 79% at Metacritic. GameSpot gave it an 8.4 and praised it for its storyline, characters, and aesthetics. IGN, which also gave it a score of 8.4 praised the cut scenes, battle system, and 2D gameplay. RPGamer gave a score of 3.5 out of 5 and also praised the game's interface and its voice acting.

GameSpot and RPGamer criticized the small soundtrack and the lack of map variety. 1up gave the game a C+ and criticized the game for being *"too watered-down"* compared to the layers of complexity found in other titles from Nippon Ichi Software America.

7.9

Deluxe Pack



Atlus Best Collection

J

Growlanser II: The Sense of Justice

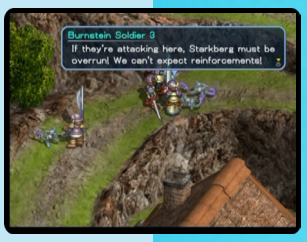
Developer	Career Soft
Publisher	Atlus
Release date	(jp) July 26, 2001
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Growlanser II: The Sense of Justice is the second game of the Growlanser series developed by Career Soft. It is the first game of the series to be a Tactical role-playing game, and carries on notable features from the first game such as branching storyline points and multiple endings. Due to the nature of these endings dealing with pairing up different characters, the series is often likened to the Dating sim genre. As a direct sequel to the first Growlanser, nearly all of the characters seen in the first game make a returning appearance as both playable and non-playable characters.

The story once again focuses on the war between the kingdoms of Rolandia and Burnstein; as opposed to the first game, the spotlight here is on the latter, as the player takes control of a young knight named Wein Cruz. Dreaming of becoming an Imperial Knight, the highest rank in his country, Wein gradually begins to see that not everything is the way it seems, and has to recount events from his own past, face injustice, and solve moral dilemmas concerning duty and friendship.

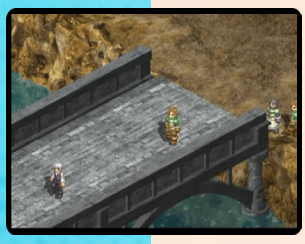
Growlanser II utilizes a free-range movement tactical RPG battle system. Unlike grid-based TRPGs, a character's movement range is represented by a circular area in which the character can move anywhere within its confines. In addition, the movement speed is based on the amount of MOV points the player have in the game. Another unusual aspect of Growlanser II's system is that it is active-time based rather than strictly turn-based. Instead of each side taking its turn in waves, both sides move and act based on individual units' speed stats. Physical attackers must move towards the enemy to connect the blow within its range while magical attackers must take the time to chant their spells in exchange for being able to hit much farther ranges.

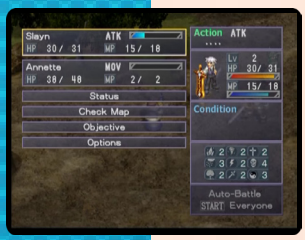
The game does not have many random encounters due to the point-based world map, but each of the major events in the story have unique battle scenarios which range from trying to escape from enemy units to rescuing missions.



Growlanser III: The Dual Darkness

8.1





Developer	Career Soft
Publisher	Atlus
Release date	(jp) December 6, 2001
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

The events of Growlanser III: The Dual Darkness take place long before those described in the first game of the series, effectively making it the prequel. The entire planet is in danger, since the sun's energy is being gradually depleted. Two powerful countries try to seize control of the land: the kingdom of Aggressival and the Xironia Federation. The player takes control of Slayn Wilder, a young man with amnesia. Following a battle against Aggressival soldiers, Slayn is rescued by a girl named Annette, who turns out to be the daughter of the president of Xironia Federation. Together, they decide to uncover the secrets of Slayn's past, and find a way to stop the war and save the planet.

Though similar in some ways to its immediate predecessor in the series, some notable changes to the gameplay were made. Four characters are now used during battles instead of eight, and the most powerful spells require cooperation between two different characters. Additionally, movement through the land now happens on an overland screen rather than on a map with pre-chosen destinations, and the player can now freely move within towns and cities.

Like in Growlanser II, a character's most notable piece of equipment is his/her Ring Weapon. Each Ring Weapon grants different stat bonuses and has three gem slots. Each gem slot has a level from 0 to 9. If the slot is level 0, no gem can be equipped there, but otherwise the slot can be equipped with a gem of the slot's level or lower. These gems can grant a variety of benefits, such as increasing the damage dealt by a character or decreasing the cost of casting spells.

The dating element is still present; instead of a branching storyline (as in the previous game), the dating largely depends on character creation (determining Slayn's blood group, etc.). Dialogue choices, however, are still plentiful, and different endings can be reached depending on the relationship level the player has reached.

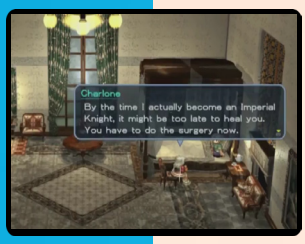
Limited Edition

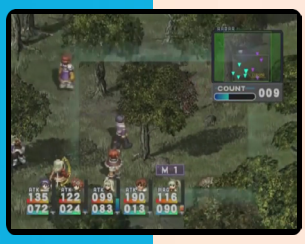
Atlus Best Collection

J

8.1

Growlanser Generations





J N

Developer	Career Soft
Publisher	Atlus, (us) Working Designs
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2003
Genre	Role-playing, Compilation
Mode	1 Player

Growlanser Generations is both a compilation of Growlanser II and Growlanser III and the sole North American release of both games. The North American localizations of both games were produced by Working Designs. This is also the last video game Working Designs released in the U.S. before they became defunct in December 2005. Growlanser II and Growlanser III were originally planned for separate American releases by Working Designs. Due to opposition from Sony, Working Designs was forced to release both games together.

The versions of Growlanser II and III presented in Growlanser Generations are slightly different than their Japanese counterparts. Working Designs opted to add an Auto-Battle feature to both games, as well as enhanced voice acting options, such as the ability to switch voice acting on or off for specific characters. Each game also has a newly added gallery of artwork, vocal outtakes (a staple of Working Designs titles), and music available upon completion.

The deluxe version also included:
- A game-themed analog watch and case
- A game-based ring, chain, and storage pouch
- A deck of playing cards
- A soundtrack with over 20 tracks.

Limited Edition (jp)

8.1

Growlanser IV: Wayfarer of the Time - Return

J

Developer	Atlus
Publisher	Atlus
Release date	(jp) March 10, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Growlanser IV: Wayfarer of the Time - Return is a visual novel addendum to Growlanser: Wayfarer of Time.

The game feature three chapters and one of them take place in the world of Growlanser 3, making it possible that Growlanser IV actually takes place in the same world as Growlanser 1 to 3, but on a different continent.

Growlanser IV: Wayfarer of the Time

8.3

Developer	Career Soft
Publisher	Atlus
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2003
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Growlanser: Wayfarer of Time, originally released for the PlayStation 2, and later for the PSP, is the fourth installment in the series, with character designs by Satoshi Urushihara.

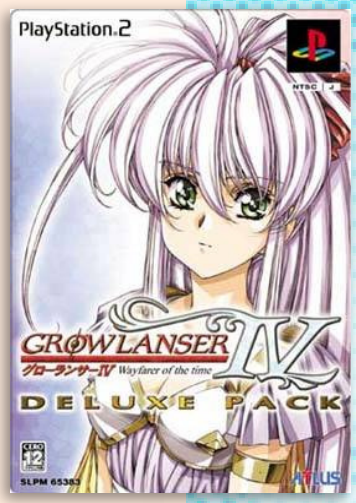
Wayfarer of Time features an isometric perspective and a “traditional RPG” style exploration in towns, dungeons and world map that are very similar to the original Growlanser.

The equipment system is markedly different from most RPGs. Characters can equip two pieces of armor, one being a “Ring Weapon”. In the Growlanser series, a Ring Weapon is a new technology where magic rings transform into different weapons depending on the user’s personality. Players find these rings often after the defeat of an enemy and can equip different rings for different stat bonuses and different gem-equip slots. There are over 100 types of gems that cause various beneficial effects such as adding extra attacks, more elemental defenses, or increasing range or adding spells to the character’s repertoire. These gems all have an innate level and that level must match or be lower than the slot available in the Ring weapon to be equipped.

There are 11 potential playable characters, but there is a four-member party limit in battles. The fate system allow players to save some characters from death based on their decisions and ultimately unlock some additional endings.

Like other games in the Growlanser series, Wayfarer of Time features some dating sim elements. The player can improve or damage the protagonist’s relationship with others based on the conversation options chosen and what decisions they make in the game. Wayfarer of Time features a new vacation system where players spend time with their party members to form close friendships or pursue romances. Completing a character’s back-story quest will unlock features such as ultimate armors skills and one of the 40 possible endings.

Deluxe Pack

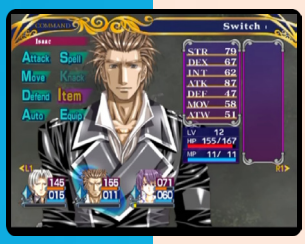


Atlus Best Collection

J

Growlanser: Heritage of War

6.0



J N P

Developer	Career Soft
Publisher	Atlus, (eu) Rising Star Games, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) August 3, 2006
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

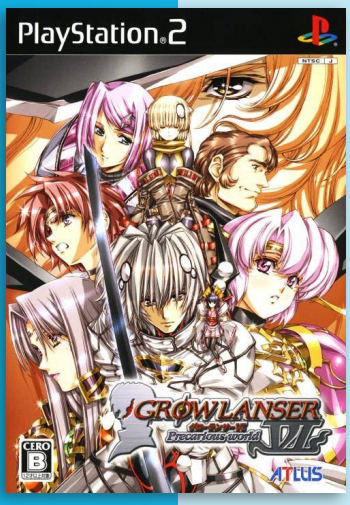
The game uses strategic party based combat and has player manageable character ability tree. It uses hand drawn animation and character portraits by Satoshi Urushihara. It has the ability to cultivate intimate relationships with characters. Battles take place in real-time, and there is no transition to a separate battle map. As such the game forces players to come up with strategies and tactics immediately as the situation calls for it.

The North American limited edition release included a 100-page artbook, multimedia disc of music and artwork, keychain, two lenticular cards, and three pins. The Limited Edition was released in a single print and then discontinued. The North American version has a new, smoother engine not present in the Japanese version.

The review Metacritic gave the game a score of 60 based on seven reviews.

Growlanser VI: Precarious World

7.8



Developer	Career Soft
Publisher	Atlus
Release date	(jp) June 21, 2007
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Growlanser VI: Precarious World is the sixth installment in the Growlanser series and is a direct sequel to Growlanser V: Generations.

Anyone who's played Growlanser V will be reminded of just how VI plays simply because both games are completely identical in their respective gameplay nature. Growlanser VI is an extension to Growlanser V, with the game revolving atound a young soldier named Merklich who, along with his friend Wendy, set out to venture through the continent of Esgerz to understand exactly what is going on between the nations of Hingstan and Fomeros and whether or not their is a means to an end of the war.

"siliconera.com"

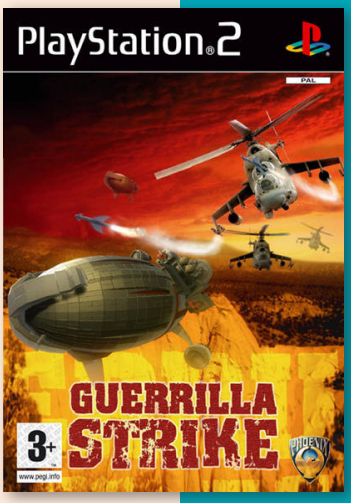
J

Guerrilla Strike

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2006
Genre	Shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

Guerrilla Strike is one of three shooters released by Phoenix Games for the Playstation 2 and does not stray from this general notion (the other three two entries are Shadow of Ganymede, Search & Destroy and the extremely rare Ocean Commander).

The game is a vertical shooter with, probably, less than a total of 10 types of enemies (ground and aerial).



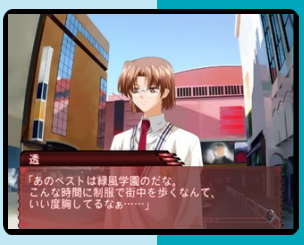
Guisard Revolution: Bokura wa Omoi o Mi ni Matou

8.0

Developer	Kid
Publisher	Kid
Release date	(jp) March 3, 2005
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

The game revolves around Guisard, a combat subdivision which consists of several young people, which dedicated themselves to daily fight with the demons, which threaten humanity.

The game was originally released for the Japanese PC in April 2003. This port updates the scenarios, includes new cinematic events, and adds exclusive game modes.



Gumball 3000

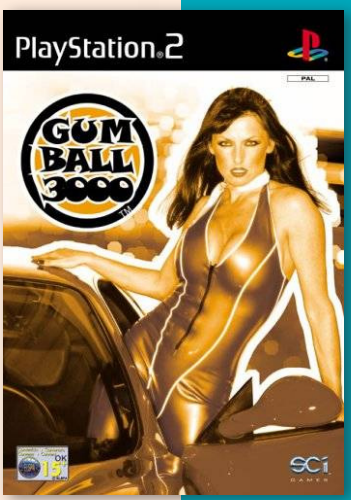
6.8

Developer	Climax Group
Publisher	SCi
Release date	(eu) September 20, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Gumball 3000 is a racing game based on the real-life 3000 mile rally of the same name that has been running annually since 1999. The full race is a single player game but other races have two player modes.

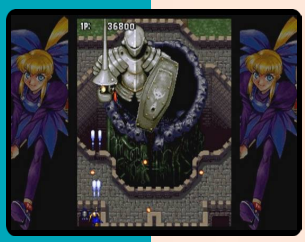
The game also feature a Gumball Gallery. This is a series of tasks, four per stage, which set specific goals for the player to achieve during a stage.

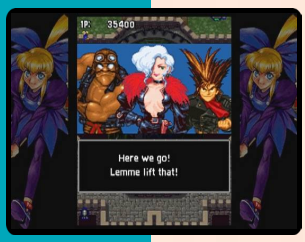
"mobygames.com"



Gunbird Special Edition

7.1



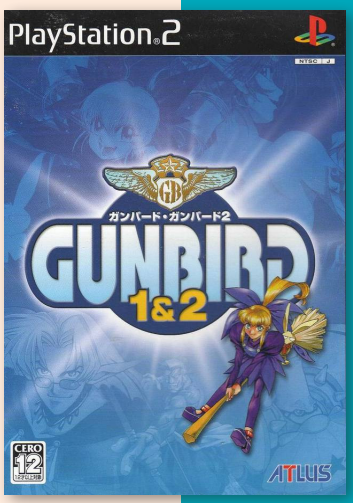


Developer	Psikyo
Publisher	Atlus, (ko) Windysoft, (eu) Empire Interactive
Release date	(jp) February 19, 2004
Genre	Shooter, Compilation
Mode	1-2 Players

Gunbird Special Edition (Gunbird 1 & 2 in Japan) is a compilation scrolling shooter for the PlayStation 2 that includes the arcade versions of Gunbird and Gunbird 2. New features include eight difficulty settings, an adjustable view option (letter boxed and vertical, full screen and horizontal), and the Practice Mode.

Gunbird

Gunbird was originally developed and published by Psikyo and released in Japanese arcades in 1994. The game is set in a fantasy setting with steampunk elements. The gameplay follows traditional genre standards. The main goal is to dodge all bullets that fill the screen while collecting power-ups to make the character stronger. Gunbird features one power-up that incrementally increases the firepower of the standard weapon (P-items) as well as additional ammo for the screen-clearing special ability (B-items). Standard weapon and special ability differ from character to character. Where some characters excel in high firepower in a straight line others allow for a wider spread of bullets or additional homing missiles.



J P

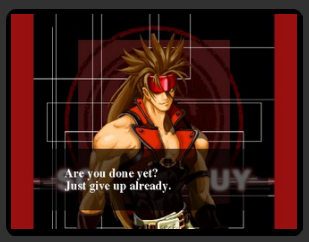
Gunbird 2

Gunbird 2 was originally developed by Psikyo and released in Japanese arcades in 1998. There are seven stages in each game loop. The first three stages are randomly chosen from possible four. At the second loop, enemies fire denser bullet patterns moving at faster speeds. Stage 2-1 takes place at the only stage not available in 1st loop, instead of the 1-1 counterpart. After completing the first loop with only one player, player can choose one of two choices for a wish with magic potion, with unique ending for each choice. If 1st loop is completed with two players, a combination-specific ending is played.

Gunbird Special Edition received generally moderately positive reviews. Retro Gamer awarded it seven stars of ten: *"If you're after a good-looking old-skool blaster, and have superhuman skills, then you'll want to show your mates exactly what you can do with this.*

7.9

Guilty Gear X



Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Sammy Studios
Release date	(eu) March 1, 2002
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Guilty Gear X (subtitled By Your Side in Japan), is the second installment of the Guilty Gear series. It was first released in July 2000 for Japanese arcades, re-released on Dreamcast in December 2000, and later ported to PlayStation 2 in November 2001.

Guilty Gear X continues its predecessor's timeline with new characters. Less than a year after the events of Guilty Gear, reports of a newly discovered commander Gear surfaced. Amid concern about a second war, another Holy Knights Tournament begins; whoever captures and kills Dizzy will receive 500,000 World Dollars. She is defeated, but her life is spared by Sol Badguy, as she proves to be inoffensive. Shortly after, she is found by Ky Kiske, the police chief of the United Nations and ex-chief of the Sacred Order of Holy Knights. He entrusts her care to Johnny and May, members of the Jellyfish Air Pirates, who welcome her as one of their own. Jam Kuradoberi, a bounty hunter and struggling chef, claims the credit for Dizzy's disappearance so she can collect the reward and finance her restaurant.

The fight system has a four-main-attack-button configuration: punch, kick, slash and heavy slash. Players may also launch taunt attacks, with their main objective to reduce the opponent's health to zero in a predetermined time. To win a fight a player must accumulate two points, with each round won earning a point. Guilty Gear X has features common in fighting games: combos, aerial attacks and counterattacks. A new feature is the Roman Cancel, which allows a player to cancel their move and its aftereffects to make other attacks.

The game has a tension gauge, increasing when a character causes damage or moves toward an adversary and decreasing when a character moves backwards or is stopped for a long time. When the gauge is half-charged a player can use specials called Overdrive Attacks, which cause more damage than regular moves. A full gauge allows a player to make an Instant Kill, defeating an opponent regardless of health; if an Instant Kill is unsuccessful, the tension gauge will not charge for the remainder of that round.

Guilty Gear X has sixteen playable characters: Sol Badguy, Ky Kiske, May, Baiken, Faust, Potemkin, Chipp Zanuff, Millia Rage, Zato-1, Jam Kuradoberi, Johnny, Anji Mito, Venom, Axl Low, Testament and Dizzy unlockable characters.

After the success of the first Guilty Gear released on May 14, 1998 for PlayStation, Sammy Studios commissioned an arcade sequel in February 1999. Developed by Team Neo Blood, an Arc System Works production group led by Daisuke Ishiwatari, the sequel was about two years in development. Unveiled at the Amusement Expo in February 2000, Guilty Gear X was released for Japanese arcades on the Sega NAOMI system in July 2000. After the game's release, it was speculated that it would be ported to home consoles. Although the developers initially indicated that Guilty Gear X would debut for the PS2, it was first released for Dreamcast on De-

cember 14, 2000 and re-released as part of a Dreamcast collection on May 23, 2003. The PS2 version was announced by Sammy in June 2001 for release that fall. Guilty Gear X ver. 1.5, an Atomiswave arcade-system version, was released in 2003 after its February 2003 introduction at the Amusement Expo.

In June 2001, Sammy reported a profit of ¥284 million for Guilty Gear X's Japanese arcade version. Its Dreamcast version was the 128th-bestselling title in Japan in 2000, with 97,934 copies sold from December 14 to December 31.

Critical reception for Guilty Gear X on Dreamcast and PS2 was positive. GameRankings and Metacritic gave the PS2 version 79 out of 100. According to T.J. Deci of AllGame, the PS2 release is *"notable for smooth, refined graphics, with richly detailed characters and backgrounds uncommon in 2D fighters."* Although Guilty Gear X's overall graphics were praised, its sometimes-confusing backgrounds were heavily criticized.

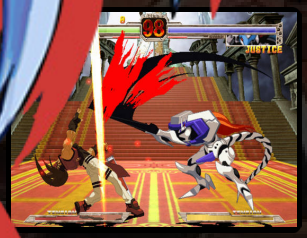
The control responsiveness was generally praised, with Greg Kasavin of GameSpot writing that it *"controls smoothly and precisely"*. Major Mike of GamePro included the caveat that *"some moves are difficult to execute and require patience to master fully."* According to James Fudge for GameSpy, "*The gameplay manages to be easy to pick up but isn't dumbed down enough to annoy expert fight fans."* Guilty Gear X's limited replay value was heavily criticised; Jay Fitzloff of Game Informer said, *"Since it's especially weak in the singles game, consider purchasing Guilty Gear X only if you and a friend want to go at it."*

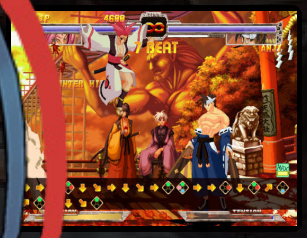
GamesRadar criticized Guilty Gear X's *"overblown aesthetics"*, giving it the game's worst score (three out of ten): *"While it's not completely hellish, it definitely deserves purgatory."* According to Star Dingo of GamePro, *"Most backgrounds seem like pale, watercolor imitations of the originals (you can count the colors on two hands)"*.

Its characters were praised as *"original"* by Justin and *"cool"* by Kasavin. Gantayat wrote, *"It's the characters that stand out the most"*, calling them *"marvelously designed," "unmatched in terms of fine details"* and *"very distinct."* According to Fudge, *"There's a character of choice for just about everyone."* The characters' balance was praised by Tom Bramwell and Knutson. Guilty Gear X's audio had a lukewarm response; according to Chet and Hwang it was *"weak"*, and Dingo called it "atrocious".[46] Mike and Kasavin found the fight announcer's voice *"unintelligible"*, with Mike also criticizing the game's *"oppressive"* music. Knutson praised Guilty Gear X's sound effects and music, and Kasavin considered its music appropriate for *"the game's fast-paced action, as well as its anime theme."*

(C)2000 Sammy / 1998, 2000 ARC SYSTEM WORKS CO., LTD.

Guilty Gear X Plus





Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Sammy Studios
Release date	(jp) November 29, 2001
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Guilty Gear X Plus is an enhanced port of Guilty Gear X, containing two extra characters and a gallery. Guilty Gear X's Dreamcast version includes four modes of play: Arcade, the game's primary narrative mode; Survival, in which the player fights through infinite levels until they are defeated; Training, which allows a player to practice moves with the help of an in-game move list and Versus, in which a player can fight another player. Guilty Gear X Plus also has art-gallery and story modes; according to the Sega website, the latter explains "misteries" which the Dreamcast version does not. The Advance Edition includes tag-team and three-on-three modes; each player chooses two or three characters, respectively, and can switch characters during a fight.

Guilty Gear X Plus adds three unlockable characters: Justice and Kliff Undersn, who return from the first game, and Robo-Ky, an alternate version of Ky Kiske. The Plus edition allows a player to unlock gold versions of each character, who possesses a special advantage over the regular version.

Guilty Gear X was released in North America on October 2, 2001. Since it was released before the Japanese version, the North American edition did not have the additional features of the Japanese counterpart. Sammy released the PS2 version in Japan on November 29, 2001 and in Europe on March 1, 2002. In Japan, it was known as Guilty Gear X Plus and was released in two versions: regular and deluxe, with the latter containing Guilty Gear-related special products. Guilty Gear X ver. 1.5, an Atomiswave arcade-system version, was released in 2003 after its February 2003 introduction at the Amusement Expo.

8.2

DX Pack

PlayStation 2 the Best

©2000 Sammy / 1998, 2000 ARC SYSTEM WORKS CO., LTD.

8.7

J N P

Guilty Gear X2

Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Sammy Studios
Release date	(jp) December 12, 2002
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Guilty Gear X2, also known as Guilty Gear XX and subtitled The Midnight Carnival in Japan, is the third main installment (5th overall) of the Guilty Gear series.

The story picks up approximately two weeks after the events of Guilty Gear X. In the time following Dizzy's disappearance, the mysterious Post-War Administration Bureau begins secretly investigating the Gears and fighters from previous tournaments for their own needs and ambitions. To achieve their goals the organization has created several mechanical copies of Ky Kiske, the "Robo-Kys". In addition, fighters find themselves in a reality beyond their control, most notably in the manipulative hands of the villainess I-No, who is revealed to be a servant of "That Man", the creator of the Gears. Each character provides a different ending to Guilty Gear X2.

The fighting system works around a four main attack button configuration, consisting of punch, kick, slash, and heavy slash. Additional buttons allow the player to perform taunts, and throw enemies in the air. When a character causes damage or moves toward its adversary, a tension gauge charges. However, when a character moves backwards or uses defensive moves often, its tension gauge is reduced. Once a character's gauge is filled, Super Mode can be engaged. When a character is in this state, super moves called Overdrive Attacks, or a variety of special techniques—"Instant Kill", "Faultless Defense," "Dead Angle Attacks" or "Roman Cancels"—can be performed.

Guilty Gear X2 adds a new feature to the series: a burst gauge, which is fulfilled as the player causes or receives damage. By pressing buttons in combination, the player character jump and unleash a blast of energy—a Psyche Burst. It allows the player to break combinations and super moves in the middle of the opponent's offensive. Also, if the blast hit the adversary, the tension gauge is filled to its maximum capacity immediately.

Guilty Gear X2 offers eight modes: Arcade, Survival, M.O.M. (an acronym for Medal of Millionaires), Mission, Story, Trainning, Versus 2P and Versus CPU. The Arcade Mode allows the player to fight against several enemies until reach the final fight against the boss. On the Survival Mode, the player continuously battle against enemies until reach the 500th and final level or die, whichever comes first. Medal of Millionaires is a variation in which the player earn medals by performing combos. In the Mission Mode, there are 50 challenges, in which the player fight with and against a predetermined character; the player character have handicaps such as being prevented from jumping, poisoned or start a fight with half of health.

The Story Mode, reveals the game's plot through battles interleaved with conversations between the player character and its enemies. It vary depending on the player's choice and performance in the battles; there is a total of 60 possible endings. The Training Mode allows the player to learn attacks by fighting a customizable CPU enemy. Two players can play

in the Versus 2P, and on the Versus CPU the player fight against an AI-controlled character. In addition to those modes, there is a gallery with artworks, character endings, and cutscenes that are unlocked by playing Arcade, Mission and Story Mode.

Guilty Gear X2 features twenty-three playable characters; twenty of them are available from outset, with Justice, Kliff Undersn, and Robo-Ky as unlockable secret characters. In addition to the return of all Guilty Gear X's roster—Sol Badguy, Ky Kiske, Johnny, May, Chipp Zanuff, Potemkin, Baiken, Axl Low, Faust, Anji Mito, Jam Kuradoberi, Dizzy, Testament, Zato-1, Millia Rage, Venom—, there are four new characters: Bridget, Zappa, Slayer, and the aforementioned I-No.

In January 2002, Sammy Studios had announced that a Guilty Gear X spin-off, titled Guilty Gear XX, would be released in Japanese arcades on the Sega NAOMI system in the spring of that year; it was released on May 23, 2002. Its porting to the PlayStation 2 was speculated in late August, with release date set to autumn in Japan, which was later confirmed by Sammy in the same month. On February 26, 2004, it was rereleased in Japan under the label "PlayStation2 the Best".

Guilty Gear X2 was the 117th best-selling title in Japan in 2002, with 112,520 copies sold as of December 31, 2002. In 2003, it sold 34,294 more copies, amounting a total of 146,814 copies sold since its release on PS2. Reviews were generally positive, with aggregate scores of 86.14% from GameRankings, and 87/100 from Metacritic. On release, Famitsu magazine scored the PS2 version of the game a 33 out of 40. The game received the maximum score from Cincinnati Enquirer, G4 TV, and Gaming Age.

Jeremy Dunham of IGN, GameZone's Michael Knutson and 1UP.com staff praised the multitude of moves; Knutson, however, said that it was difficult performing special moves, and 1UP.com affirmed *"The real improvement, though, is the addition of more life-destroying options, like the hyper-addictive Challenge mode."* Dunham accuse the fighting engine of being *"too advanced for the casual fighting fan"*, also criticizing its *"sucker"* control scheme. Conversely, GamePro thought it *"can be enjoyed by novices and veterans alike"*, and Matt Keil of G4 said it *"is surprisingly accessible"* to all gamers. Dunham cited how the *"two-player mode allows for near-infinite possibilities and all the extra options are just icing on the cake."* In contrast Kasavin criticized the other modes for not being as engaging as the two-player mode.

Dunham stated it has *"incredibly attractive backgrounds, super slick animations, and the best character design on PlayStation 2."* An Electronic Gaming Monthly reviewer stated it has *"cooler character designs on a PS2 fighter"* whilst another said, *"some of the coolest 2D game artwork ever."* Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine deemed it as *"the best-looking 2D graphics ever seen in a fighter."*

Kasavin commented that its *"cohesive musical style... further helps set this game apart."* Dunham deemed it as having *"One of the best soundtracks to come along for quite some time"*, and praised Sammy for keeping the original voice actors, as did Knutson, which felt it *"gives it a 'cooler aura'."*

Other features praised include its short loading time, the variety of game modes and characters, the balance between characters' abilities, the response of the controls, its replay value, and variety of features.

Guilty Gear X2 updated versions

Guilty Gear X2 received updated versions for several platforms: Guilty Gear X2 #Reload (2003), Guilty Gear XX Slash (2005), Guilty Gear XX Accent Core (2006), Guilty Gear XX Accent Core Plus (2008), and Guilty Gear XX Accent Core Plus R (2012). Each update served to the company to perform adjustments comparing to the previous versions and was published in different platforms and regions.

Although each installment has received both praise and criticism for its particularities, all the Guilty Gear X2 updated versions have generally being well received by critics.

Guilty Gear XX #Reload

Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Sammy Studios, (eu) Zoo Digital Publishing
Release date	(jp) July 31, 2003
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

8.1

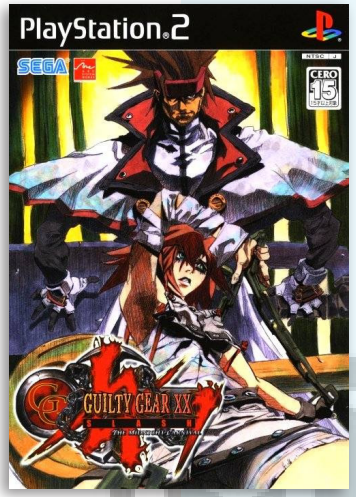
Guilty Gear X2 #Reload, released as Guilty Gear XX: The Midnight Carnival #Reload in Japan, is the first updated version of Guilty Gear X2. Adjustments on balance high-level play were made and Robo-Ky was made playable from the beginning. The number of challenges in Mission Mode was increased to 100, Survival Mode has 1000 levels in #Reload, and the player can damage the enemy normally or perform combos to gain next level quicker.

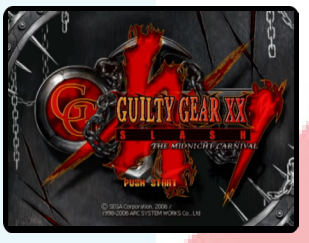
Sammy first released on March 26, 2003 in the Japanese arcades, and on PS2, with ports on released on Xbox, Windows, and PSP. It was also released in the Xbox Live service "Xbox Originals". On September 5, 2014, it was released on Steam. The South Korean release was the most singular, because it included a new soundtrack composed by Korean musician Shin Hae Chul, and featured all synth. However, the rock and metal theme of the series' music remains in this soundtrack, as well.

Guilty Gear X2 #Reload's PS2 version sold 91,130 copies. Guilty Gear X2 #Reload was praised for its graphics; GamePro stated *"The 2D-animation cel-like graphics are simply gorgeous and animate smoothly"*, while PALGN commented that its *"[e]xcellent character design combined with some visually appealing backgrounds make GGX2:Reload one of the best looking 2D games ever."* IGN said it *"offers a solid framerate (even online), lush visuals, and an incredible amount of gameplay depth."*

Guilty Gear XX Slash

8.4





Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Sammy Studios, Sega
Release date	(jp) April 13, 2006
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Guilty Gear XX Slash is the second updated version of Guilty Gear X2. Once again, the game's balance was reworked by changing properties of certain moves and including new moves for some of the characters; GameSpot noted *"the game seems to be balanced better than its predecessors."* Two new characters were introduced to the game, these being A.B.A, who debuted in Guilty Gear Isuka, and Order-Sol, who is Sol Badguy with an entirely different costume, and moveset. It was first released on September 28, 2005 for the arcades in Japan. In December 2005, it was reported that it would be ported for PS2, which occurred on April 13, 2006. This version was the best-selling title for PS2 in its debut week, being fifth overall; it sold 87,414 copies in Japan as of December 31, 2006. It was later re-released under "Sega the Best" collection on March 17, 2007.

Guilty Gear XX Accent Core

7.7

Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Arc System Works, (us) Aksys Games
Release date	(jp) May 31, 2007
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Guilty Gear XX Accent Core is the third version of Guilty Gear X2. In addition to balance changes, Accent Core features a new type of special move, the "Force Break," which uses 25% of the tension gauge. It also introduces moves that make opponents stick briefly to walls or slide across the floor of a stage. New additions also include "Slashback," a form of parrying with reduced block stun, and throw breaks. Both versions of the game feature three gameplay modes per character, based on the Guilty Gear, Guilty Gear X, and Accent Core fighting systems. Accent Core also underwent a major aesthetic change for the series. In addition to a new opening movie, and a redesigned menu, all voices, including that of the announcer, have been re-recorded (or replaced with previously unused samples), sometimes by different actors. The playable character artwork was also redone.

8.0

Guilty Gear XX Accent Core Plus

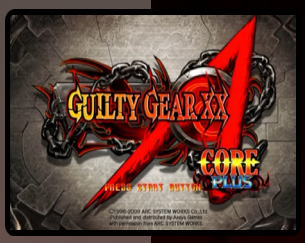
J N P

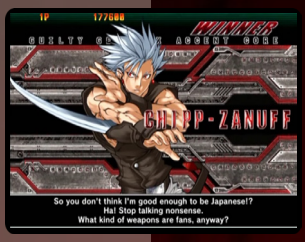
Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Arc System (JP), (us) Aksys Games, (eu) PQube
Release date	(jp) March 27, 2008
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Guilty Gear XX Accent Core Plus is the fourth version of Guilty Gear X2, and an enhanced version of Accent Core. No changes to the battle system have been made, but new features were added. Features include Kliff and Justice's return, with appropriate changes and additions, the return of Mission Mode, a new Survival Mode with level-up features, a new Gallery Mode with new illustrations, and bug fixes, rebalances, and tune ups from the previous version. It also features a new Story Mode. The story is a continuation of the storyline from Guilty Gear X2. All characters have a storyline, and the stories cover the major events involving the mystery of Gears, "That Man" and conflict with the Post-War Administration Bureau.

It was first released on March 27, 2008 for the PS2, along with an "Append Edition" released on the same day. The game was also released for PSP, on the PlayStation Store, Wii, Xbox 360 (via Xbox Live Arcade) and the PlayStation 3 (via PlayStation Network).

Its PS2 version sold 28,867 copies in Japan as of December 28, 2008 and has an aggregate score of 82.67% from GameRankings. Clements affirmed, *"Somewhat less glamorous than previous Guilty Gears, Accent Core Plus still has a polished feel and an interesting universe."* He said the graphics and the music may be *"a little old,"* but *"it's still highly entertaining"*.





"...Guilty Gear X2 is a gem of a 2D fighter."
PlayStation World

90%
Play

"...this superior fighter significantly shifts up a gear. Class."
Official Xbox Magazine

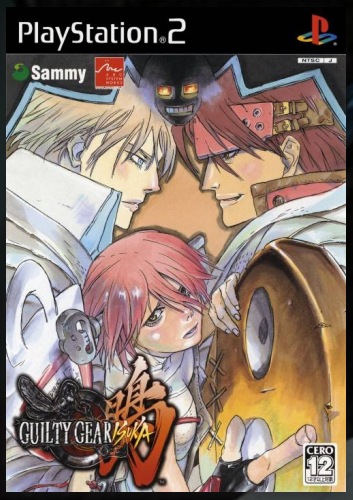
Buy online at www.zoodigitalpublishing.com

XBOX LIVE PlayStation 2 ARC SYSTEM WORKS ZOO Digital Publishing
www.zoodigitalpublishing.com

Published by ZOO Digital Publishing Ltd. © 2004 ZOO Digital Publishing Ltd. ZOO Digital Publishing and the ZOO Digital Publishing logo are trademarks of ZOO Digital Publishing Ltd., part of the ZOO Digital Group plc. All rights reserved. © 2004 Arc Studios. The PlayStation family logo and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, and the Xbox and Xbox Live logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All rights reserved.

Guilty Gear Isuka

7.3



JNP

Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Sammy Studios, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) July 29, 2004
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Guilty Gear Isuka is a 2D fighting game originally relesed for arcades as the sixth installment of the Guilty Gear series.

The basic gameplay system of Guilty Gear Isuka is like the other games in the series. The game uses a four attack button configuration that consists of punch, kick, slash, and high slash. Unlike previous games, it features a "turn" button, since a character does not automatically turn around if its opponent moves to the other side of the screen. Each character (or team) starts a fight with at least a "soul"; when a character life bar is emptied, its life is filled while the player lost a soul. If the life is depleted when the player has no souls, it is defeated. It also features previous instalments features like the tension gauge, which allows the player to perform super moves, and the burst gauge, which allows the player to break combinations and super moves.

The game introduces a four-player option in Versus Mode, giving a player four characters who can fight two-on-two, three-on-one or everyone-for-themselves. There are two fighting planes, one in the foreground and the other behind it.

Another innovation was Boost Mode: a two-player, side-scrolling, arcade-style beat 'em up mode not included in the arcade version, in which a player fights enemy waves to accumulate items, health and experience. For the Xbox, this mode was adapted for online play with Xbox Live, supporting up to 16 players. Experience points from Boost Mode can be used in the new Robo-Ky II Factory mode, in which a player can customize a robot named Robo-Ky II by teaching him moves, combos, or one of 65 special attacks from other characters. In addition to the attacks, other aspects such as jump height, offense, defense, recovery time, tension, and speed can be improved.

The game also features other modes: Color Edit, a palette swap editor that allows the player to customize nearly every aspect of the characters, including buckles and hair; Training, in which a player can practice with (and against) computer-controlled opponents and Arcade, similar to the survival mode featured in other fighting games.

The game features twenty playable characters in its arcade version: Anji Mito, Axl Low, Baiken, Bridget, Chipp Zanuff, Dizzy, Eddie, Faust, I-No, Jam Kuradoberi, Johnny, Ky Kiske, May, Millia Rage, Potemkin, Slayer, Sol Badguy, Testament, Venom, and Zappa. Three characters were added to the PlayStation 2 edition: A.B.A, Robo-Ky, and Robo-Ky II.

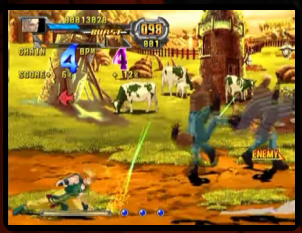
In September 2003, Sammy Corporation announced that a new game dubbed Guilty Gear X Series The Newest Version would be featured at the Japan Amusement Machinery Manufacturers Association (JAMMA) arcade show; at the show, the company revealed that Guilty Gear Isuka would be the game's name. *"In Guilty Gear Isuka we want to satisfy existing fighter fans with new content and never-before-seen innovations. We also want to reach out to mainstream fans to show them that, right now,*

the envelope in fighting games is also being pushed in two dimensions", declared Tim Pivnicny, senior VP of Sammy Studios, Inc. A PlayStation 2 version of the game was announced to be in development on March 3, 2004. An August 24 announcement said that the game would be compatible with Xbox.

Guilty Gear Isuka was released in Japan on December 17, 2003 by Sammy for the Atomiswave arcade cabinets, followed by the PlayStation 2 version on July 29, 2004. In North America, Guilty Gear Isuka was released by Sammy for PlayStation 2 and in Europe by 505 Games Street. DotEmu also released Guilty Gear Isuka on its DRM-free shop in 2011. In 2014, the game was released on the Steam digital distribution platform for PCs.

Guilty Gear Isuka was the 176th-bestselling Japanese title in 2004, with 74,270 copies sold for PlayStation 2 as of December 26. It was "Best Fighting Game" at the Best of E3 2004 Awards from IGN, and was nominated for "Best Sequel Fighting" at the 2004 National Academy of Video Game Testers and Reviewers (NAVGTR) Awards. The game received mixed reviews from critics, with a score of 75.56% at GameRankings and 73/100 at Metacritic. Allgame's Damian Francis gave the game three-and-a-half stars out of five; Famitsu's four reviewers scored it 27 out of 40.

Although the introduction of two planes and the turning button were considered good ideas in theory, both features were heavily criticized by reviewers. Jeremy Dunham of IGN, Manny LaMancha of GamePro and Benjamin Turner of GameSpy felt it difficult to fight one-on-one when a player can start a cat-and-mouse game, while GameSpot's Greg Kasavin and Brian Gee of Game Revolution found the features to cause "chaos". Turner said it



deprived the player of the ability *"to have a normal Guilty Gear X2-style match"*, and Dunham said the computer reacted faster. David Smith of 1UP.com called it an *"irrational control scheme"*. The perceived poor execution of its new features led GameSpy to give it a special *"It Sounded Good on Paper"* award.

Conversely, other additions received more positive feedback. Dunham called the Boost and Factory modes *"intriguing distractions"*, while Turner praised the latter for *"much depth and nuance"*, unreached by other games. Kasavin said the Boost Mode gets boring quickly due to the lack of an objective; though Kasavin declared that the Factory Mode *"is quite possibly the most interesting part of the gameplay"*, he criticized how it depends on playing *"a mindless side-scroller over and over."* The new backgrounds were commended by Dunham, Kasavin and Smith, with the latter saying that Sammy should have saved them for a better game.

The maintenance of aspects from previous titles, including its animation and soundtrack, was praised by Kasavin, Turner, and Gee. Its soundtrack was said to be *"the best score in the franchise so far"* by Dunham, and was rated among video game soundtracks which *"never got the recognition they truly deserve"* by Siliconera. LaMancha, however, criticized a lack of improvement of its animation and music compared to its gameplay. The removal of other features from previous titles was criticized: Dunham and Kasavin complained about the lack of a story mode, while Joe Juba of Game Informer said the series had a *"magic"* until Isuka, criticizing the new additions and the absence of a traditional arcade mode. Isuka was well-rated on balance, but considered inferior to the previous Guilty Gear X2 #Reload.

GITADORA

by: remywiki.com

GuitarFreaks and DrumMania are rock-oriented music arcade games produced by Konami. In GuitarFreaks, the player uses a controller to simulate the playing of an electric guitar, while in DrumMania, the player must hit the drum parts when the notes reach the bottom of the screen in order to fill in missing drum parts from a song. The game consists of music predominantly from rock, metal, and J-Pop genres, and is now in its 25th and 24th versions, GITADORA Matixx GuitarFreaks and GITADORA Matixx DrumMania respectively, which were released in September 2017.

In GuitarFreaks the interface is similar to other games in the BEMANI series. Two note scrolls - one for each player - are displayed at the left and right sides of the screen. Videos for each song are displayed in the center of the screen. Each note scroll consists of columns: one each for the red, green, and blue buttons, and another column, known as the Wailing Bonus column. Individual notes and chords are represented by small colored bars that scroll upward in the columns. To play the correct note, the player must hold down the buttons corresponding to the colored bars, and move the fret lever when the bars reach the yellow fretting line. When a guitar icon is displayed in the Wailing Bonus column along with an associated note, the player can tilt the guitar upright while playing the note to receive bonus points.

The player's accuracy is judged for each note played. The current system uses the names Perfect, Great, Good, Poor, and Miss to indicate a player's accuracy. Ratings of Poor or Miss will deplete the player's Groove Gauge, while Perfect and Great ratings will replenish it. If the Groove Gauge is emptied completely, the player fails, and the game ends.

In DrumMania, the screen setup is simple. On the left side, notes scroll vertically downwards and a short video clip for each song is displayed in the right side of the screen. Individual notes are represented by small colored bars that scroll downward in the columns.

To play the correct note, the player must hit one or two of these pads and/or step the pedal(s) when the note bars reach the yellow line. The note scroll in DrumMania is in essence a drum tablature timed with the music and placed vertically.

The player's accuracy is judged for each note played, and while the individual note judgments have changed throughout the series, the current system uses Perfect, Great, Good, Poor, and Miss to evaluate performance of each note. Ratings of Poor or Miss will deplete the player's "Excite Gauge", while accurate play will replenish it. If the Excite Gauge is emptied completely, the game ends.

At the completion of a song, players are given a letter rank for their performance which can range anywhere from E to A, as well as S and SS depending on how well the song was played, and how the particular release of the game being played computes ranks.

Drummania, along with Guitarfreaks influenced the development of popular North American console games Guitar Hero and Rock Band.

Konami has not mass produced an American version of DrumMania, primarily since John Devecka holds the US patent for "drum simulation games", which Activision had purchased and utilized in the Guitar Hero series. Even with this possible obstacle in mind, Konami has tested English builds of DrumMania and GuitarFreaks V4 at the ATEI exhibition in London and at a Brunswick Zone bowling alley in Naperville, Illinois - though official releases have not been announced. Nonetheless, imported versions of DrumMania can be found in various locations across the United States and Canada.

In 2008, Konami sued Rock Band developer Harmonix for allegedly violating three patents for its drum and guitar based music games. The lawsuit was eventually settled in 2010 and its claims dismissed.

GuitarFreaks & DrumMania Masterpiece Silver

7.4

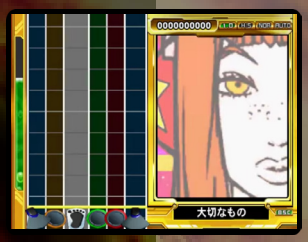
Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) August 31, 2006
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 (3) Players

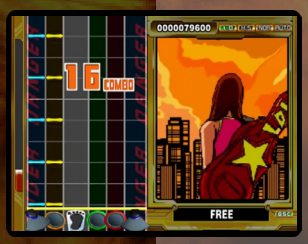
GuitarFreaks & DrumMania Masterpiece Silver, released August 31st, 2006, is the first of two "best hits" PS2 GuitarFreaks / DrumMania games, featuring a selection of songs that span from GuitarFreaks 5thMIX & drummania 4thMIX through GuitarFreaks 11thMIX & drummania 10thMIX, chosen from surveys by the fans. The song ratings reflect arcade ratings as of GF/DM V2. The game feature 74 songs.

"remywiki.com"

Guitar Freaks & DrumMania: Masterpiece Gold

8.0





Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 8, 2007
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 (3) Players

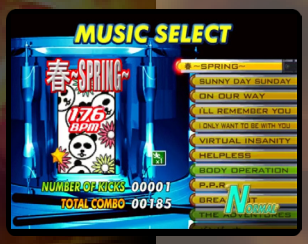
Masterpiece Gold was the second of two "best hits" PS2 GuitarFreaks / DrumMania games, featuring a selection of 76 songs that span from GuitarFreaks 5thMIX & drummania 4thMIX through GuitarFreaks 11thMIX & drummania 10thMIX, chosen from surveys by the fans.

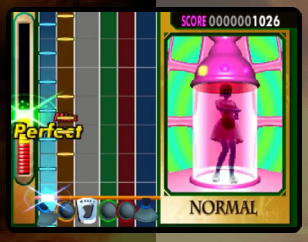
Similar to the last Masterpiece title, unlocks are obtained via unlocking pieces of a hidden picture on a 4x4 square grid. The player must stop the symbols onscreen on the unrevealed square pieces, in a roulette-like fashion. The number of symbols the player receives depends on how well players performed during the runthrough. The number of unlocks have increased from Masterpiece Silver, but unlike the previous title, symbols will only land on unrevealed square pieces. When all pieces of the square are uncovered, a new skin, wallpaper, or song related to the hidden picture is unlocked.

This roulette may also be turned off in favor of time-released unlocks. Like before, both time spent in Arcade and Free Mode playing songs counts towards unlock time.

8.5

Guitar Freaks 3rd Mix & DrumMania 2nd Mix





J

Developer	KCEJ
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) December 7, 2000
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

The game, released December 7th, 2000, is a port of GuitarFreaks 3rdMIX & drummania 2nd-MIX's new songs, except for the three Guitar-Freaks 2ndMIX Append songs (ERAser ENgiNe, Love This Feelin' and Powerdunker2000X) and two of drummania 2ndMIX licenses (Anarchy in the U.K. and Love Affair). The game only have two Extra Stage songs available: Csmic Cowgirl when playing Normal, and Say What You Mean when playing Expert. The game feature a total of 44 number of songs. It was also the first CS game with BASS charts.

"remywiki.com"

Guitar Freaks 4th Mix & DrumMania 3rd Mix

8.0

J

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) September 20, 2001
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

The game, released September 20th, 2001, was the last GuitarFreaks & DrumMania game on the PlayStation 2 for five years. As direct port of Gui-tarFreaks 4thMIX & drummania 3rdMIX, having almost all its new songs (only Killer Queen and 桜の時 are absent), it feature 44 songs.

Once all the songs have been added to Free Mode, Endless Mode (エンドレス・モード) is unlocked. In this mode, the player can play songs until the gauge is depleted. The Extra/Encore stage ap-pears in Arcade Mode if the player have an aver-age skill of 750 (GF side) or an average rank S or more (dm side). The difficulty played on the last song will be the difficulty of the Extra and Encore stage. The Extra or Encore stage does not appear when playing Bonus Track, Normal (dm side) and Free Select (GF side).

"remywiki.com"

Guitar Freaks V & DrumMania V

7.9

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) March 16, 2006
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 (3) Players

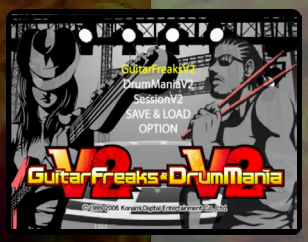
This was the first new home version in 5 years, following ギタドラ! GuitarFreaks 4thMIX & drummania 3rdMIX. Misirlou is missing from the songlist.

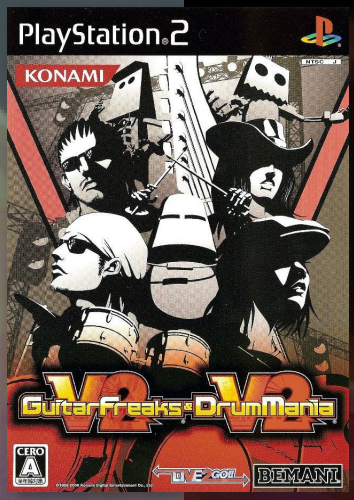
There are also 20 hidden songs. Players can unlock all but 2 of them by obtaining points in the Gitado Slot game at the end of each arcade round.

"remywiki.com"

Guitar Freaks V2 & DrumMania V2

7.4





Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) November 22, 2006
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 (3) Players

The game was the first GF/DM game with new CS songs since ギタドラ! GuitarFreaks 4thMIX & drummania 3rdMIX. The game feature 64 songs.

There are 18 hidden songs. Players can unlock all but 3 of them by winning rounds in GuitarChanko. Once they earn enough wins, they unlock 1/2 songs.

"remywiki.com"

Guitar Freaks V3 & DrumMania V3

8.0

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) October 4, 2007
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 (3) Players

This was the last CS GuitarFreaks / DrumMania game on the PlayStation 2. The game feature a total number of 80 songs.

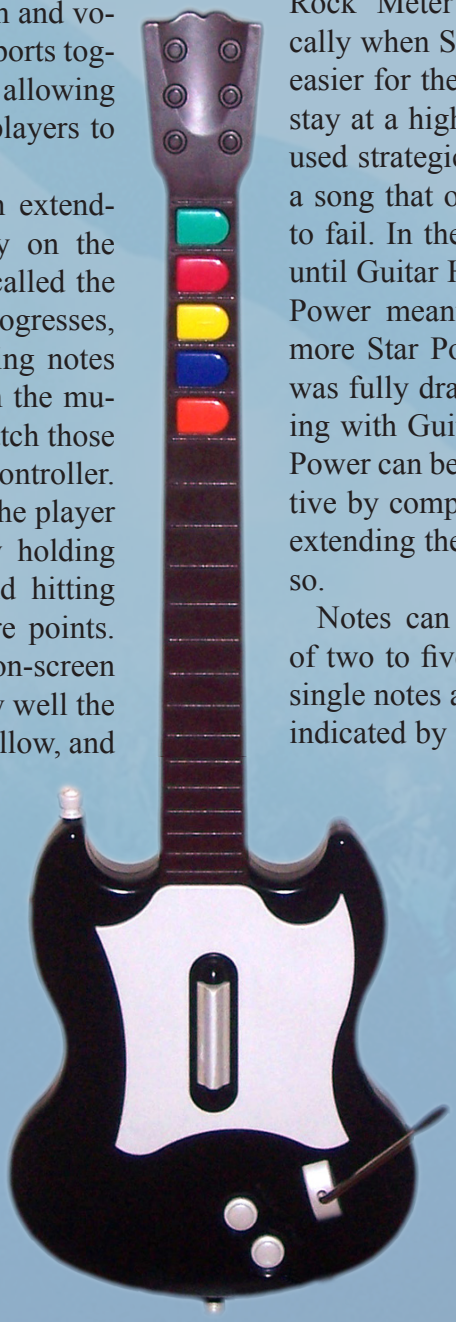
The game feature Shop Ranking songs, Chara Battlesong 繚乱ヒットチャート, and the Gitado King 3 songs. The game was the only CS GuitarFreaks / DrumMania game not to include an Extra/Encore Stage from its matching arcade release.

Guitar Hero

The Guitar Hero series (sometimes referred to as the Hero series) is a series of music rhythm games first published in 2005 by RedOctane and Harmonix, and distributed by Activision, in which players use a guitar-shaped game controller to simulate playing lead, bass guitar, and rhythm guitar across numerous rock music songs.

The core gameplay of the Guitar Hero games is a rhythm game similar to Konami's Guitar Freaks and to a lesser extent Harmonix's previous music games such as Frequency and Amplitude. The guitar controller is recommended for play, although a standard console controller can be used instead. However, the guitar controller has been required for play ever since the inclusion of drum and vocal parts in the series. The game supports toggling the handedness of the guitar, allowing both left-handed and right-handed players to utilize the guitar controller.

While playing the game, an extended guitar neck is shown vertically on the screen (the frets horizontal), often called the "note highway", and as the song progresses, colored markers or "gems" indicating notes travel down the screen in time with the music; the note colors and positions match those of the five fret keys on the guitar controller. Once the note(s) reach the bottom, the player must play the indicated note(s) by holding down the correct fret button(s) and hitting the strumming bar in order to score points. Success or failure will cause the on-screen Rock Meter to change, showing how well the player is playing (denoted by red, yellow, and green sections). Should the Rock Meter drop below the red section, the song will automatically end, with the player booed off the stage by the audience. Successful note hits will add to the player's score, and by hitting a long series of consecutive successful note hits, the player can increase their score multiplier. There is a window of time for hitting each note, similar to other rhythm games such as Dance Dance Revolution, but unlike these games, scoring in Guitar Hero is not affected by accuracy; as long as the note is hit within that window, the player receives the same number of points.



Selected special segments of the song will have glowing notes outlined by stars: successfully hitting all notes in this series will fill the "Star Power Meter". The Star Power Meter can also be filled by using the whammy bar during sustained notes within these segments. Once the Star Power Meter is at least half full, the player can activate "Star Power" by pressing the select button or momentarily lifting the guitar into a vertical position. When Star Power is activated, the scoring multiplier is doubled until Star Power is depleted. The Rock Meter also increases more dramatically when Star Power is activated, making it easier for the player to make the Rock Meter stay at a high level. Thus, Star Power can be used strategically to play difficult sections of a song that otherwise might cause the player to fail. In the earlier entries of the series (up until Guitar Hero: Aerosmith), activating Star Power meant that players could not accrue more Star Power until the Star Power meter was fully drained and the effect ended. Starting with Guitar Hero: World Tour, more Star Power can be collected even if the effect is active by completing more Star Power phrases, extending the Star Power's duration by doing so.

Notes can be a single note, or composed of two to five notes that make a chord. Both single notes and chords can also be sustained, indicated by a colored line following the note marker; the player can hold the sustained note(s) keys down for the entire length for additional points. During a sustained note, a player may use the whammy bar on the guitar to alter the tone of the note. Also, regardless of whether sustains are hit early or late, if the fret is held for the full duration of the hold, the game will always award the same amount of score increase for the note. In addition, the games support virtual implementations of "hammer-ons" and "pull-offs",

guitar-playing techniques that are used to successfully play a fast series of notes by only changing the fingering on the fret buttons without having to strum each note. Sequences where strumming is not required are indicated on-screen by notes with a white outline at the top of the marker instead of the usual black one.

While the song is playing, the background visuals feature the players' chosen avatar, along with the rest of the band performing in one of several real and fictional venues. The reaction of the audience is based on the performance of the player judged by the Rock Meter. The games developed by Neversoft feature a simple storyline, usually about a band's quest for fame, which is told through animations played throughout the game. These animations were created by Chris Prynoski and his studio, Titmouse, Inc., who have also done animations for the animated show Metalocalypse.

The main mode of play in the Guitar Hero games is Career Mode, where the player and in-game band travel between various fictional performance arenas and perform sets of four to six songs. It is by completing songs in this mode that the songs are unlocked for play across the rest of the game. Players can choose their on-stage character, their guitar of choice, and the venue in which they wish to play. In this mode, the player can earn money from his/her performances that is redeemable at the in-game store, where bonus songs, additional guitars and finishes, your characters clothing and bonus content can be unlocked. Quick Play mode is a quicker method of playing songs, as it allows the player to select a track and difficulty, selecting the character, venue, and guitar and guitar skin for the player based on the song chosen. After successfully completing a song, the player is given a score, a percentage of how many notes they hit and a rating from three to five stars, and two in rare cases depending on his/her final score on the song.

The games have also added multiplayer modes. Cooperative modes allow two players to play lead and either bass or rhythm guitar on the same song, working together towards the same score. A competitive Face-Off mode allows two players to play against each other at different difficulty levels, each attempting to earn the best score on a song. Each player plays different portions of the song. There is also a Pro Face-Off mode, where two players battle at the same difficulty level. Unlike standard Face-off, each player attempts to play all of the notes in a song, while still trying to earn the highest score.

The four difficulty levels for each song afford players a learning curve in order to help their progress in skill. The first difficulty level, Easy, only focuses on the first three fret buttons while displaying a significantly reduced number of notes for the player to play. Medium introduces the fourth (blue) fret button, and Hard includes the final fret button while adding additional notes. The addition of the orange fret button forces players to move their fingers up and down the neck. Expert does not introduce any other frets to learn, but adds more notes in a manner designed to challenge the player and to simulate the player's hands to move in a sequence similar to a real guitar.

When playing through Career mode or in other parts of the Guitar Hero games, the player has the option to select one of several pre-created avatar characters, who will be shown performing on stage as the player attempts a song, but otherwise has no effect on the gameplay. A certain number of characters are available at the start of the game, but the player must spend in-game money earned by successful performances to unlock other characters. Many of the characters reappear throughout the series, with the character roster changing as new characters are added or removed. Standby characters that have appeared in nearly all the games include the metalhead Axel Steel, extreme/Viking/thrash metalhead Lars Ümlaut, punk rocker Johnny Napalm, alternative rocker Judy Nails, and hard rocker Casey Lynch.

Most of the games in the Guitar Hero series feature a selection of songs ranging from the 1960s to present day rock music from both highly successful artists and bands and independent groups.

Guitar Hero was created from a partnership between RedOctane, then their own company that produced specialized video game controllers, and Harmonix, a music video game development company who had previously produced Frequency, Amplitude and Karaoke Revolution. RedOctane was seeking to bring in a Guitar Freaks-like game, highly popular in Japan at the time, into Western markets, and approached Harmonix about helping them to develop a music game involving a guitar controller. Both companies agreed to it, and went on to produce Guitar Hero in 2005. The title was highly successful, leading to the development of its successful

sequel Guitar Hero II in 2006. While the original controllers for the first Guitar Hero game were designed by Ryan Lesser, Rob Kay, Greg LoPiccolo and Alex Rigopulous of Harmonix and built by the Honeybee Corporation of China, subsequent iterations and future controllers were developed inhouse at RedOctane, with development led primarily by Jack McCauley.

Both RedOctane and Harmonix experienced changes in 2006. RedOctane was bought by Activision in June — who spent $100 million to acquire the Guitar Hero franchise — while it was announced in October that Harmonix would be purchased by MTV Networks. As a result of the two purchases, Harmonix would no longer develop future games in the Guitar Hero series. Instead, that responsibility would go to Neversoft, a subsidiary of Activi sion known for developing the Tony Hawk's series. Neversoft was chosen to helm the Guitar Hero series after Neversoft founder, Joel Jewett, admitted to the RedOctane founders, Kai and Charles Huang, that his development team for Tony Hawk's Project 8 went to work on weekends just to play Guitar Hero. Activision CEO Bobby Kotick believed that Neversoft would help them bring great games to the series, but on reflection, stated that had Activision explored Harmonix further as a continued developer for the series, things *"may have turned out differently"*. In addition, Activision began seeking other markets for the game; a Nintendo DS version of the series was developed by Vicarious Visions, while a Guitar Hero Mobile series was created for mobile phones. The company also began considering the expansion of the series to band-specific titles with Guitar Hero: Aerosmith. Later, in November 2008, Activision acquired Budcat Creations, another development studio that had helped with the PlayStation 2 versions of Guitar Hero III and World Tour, announcing that they would be helping to develop another game in the Guitar Hero series.

In 2007, Harmonix and MTV Games released a new music title through rival publisher Electronic Arts, called Rock Band. It expanded upon the gameplay popularized by the Guitar Hero series by adding drum and microphone instruments, allowing players to simulate playing songs as bands. Activision followed suit with the release of Guitar Hero World Tour in 2008, which supported multiple instruments. In 2009, Activision tripled its Guitar Hero offerings, and in addition to further continuation of the existing main series with Guitar Hero 5 and expansions, they introduced the titles Band Hero, geared towards more family-friendly pop music, and DJ Hero, a game based on turntablism and featuring a number of mixes. With the release of Guitar Hero 5, Activision considered the series to have moved away from its heavy metal basis into a broader selection of music. Guitar Hero 5 is the first game in the series to use a new version of the series' logo; previous games used a logo in a font with sharper "points" on the letters, which was considered *"idiosyncratic with a vengeance"* to match the games' emphasis on heavy metal music. Activision used the services of the Pentagram design studio to refashion the game's logo. Pentagram developed a new font, removing some of the *"aggressive odd"* features to make the typeface more suitable and amendable to design feature incorporation to other games such as Band Hero and DJ Hero.

The results of the expanded offerings did not contribute well to the series, alongside the late-2000s recession; sales of most rhythm games including Guitar Hero and DJ Hero did not meet expectations, falling about 50% short of projected targets. Activision announced it would be cutting back to only 10 SKUs within 2010 instead of the 25 in 2009. Though RedOctane and Neversoft continued to develop the 6th main game, Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock, until its completion, both studios were later shuttered by Activision, moving key personnel into Activision directly for future game development, and in the case of Neversoft, closing its Guitar Hero division, while transferring future development duties for the series to Vicarious Visions, another Activision studio which had been fundamental in building the Wii and Nintendo DS versions of the games. In November 2010, Activision also closed Budcat Creations, the arm of the publisher that was primarily responsible for porting the Guitar Hero games to the PlayStation 2.

Ahead of Activision's 2010 fourth quarter financial report in February 2011, Activision disbanded its Guitar Hero business unit and announced that it would cease development of the planned 2011 Guitar Hero game. Activision cited *"continued declines in the music genre"* to explain its decision. The closure also affected the DJ Hero series, as Activision stated that there were no plans to publish a music game during 2011. Activision's vice president Dan Winters later clarified that the company was *"just putting Guitar Hero on hiatus"* and that they were *"just not making a new game for*

next year, that's all".

In a July 2011 interview with Forbes, Kotick stated that while the publisher was *"going to stop selling Guitar Hero altogether"*, they were *"going to go back to the studios and we're going to use new studios and reinvent"* the series, but a former teammember of Vicarious Visions stated that as of 2012, all development of Guitar Hero had come to an end within Activision. Another source close to Vicarious Visions had reported to the blog site, Kotaku, that while Guitar Hero 7 was in development under an Activision studio, the game was considered a *"disaster"*. The cancelled game omitted the additional instruments and used only a guitar peripheral, redesigning the unit to include a 6-button mechanism replacing the strum bar; the resulting unit was considered too expensive to manufacture and purchase. The developers had also started the game development from scratch to try to create new characters and venues that would be more reactive to the actual songs being played to give the feel of a music video, but ultimately this proved too much of a challenge and had to be scrapped. Further, with a limited budget, the song selection was limited to "low-budget" hits of the 1990s, or at times reusing songs that had previously been included in Guitar Hero games. Though the team had a two-year development cycle, it was closed down after Activision president Eric Hirshber had seen the current state of the project at the one-year point.

Another potential Guitar Hero project was discovered by the archival site Unseen64 for a game titled Hero World, a massively multiplayer online game that would link the Guitar Hero and DJ Hero games. The game had been developed by FreeStyleGames, sometime after the release of DJ Hero 2, with the main development duties passed to Virtual Fairground, using their platform The Ride, an Adobe Flash-based platform that would let the game be played in a web browser. The game was cancelled in 2011 along with other pending Guitar Hero projects.

No further downloadable content for either Guitar Hero or DJ Hero was made after February 2011, though Activision committed to releasing content that was already in development by that time due to fan response; later, in a move described by Game Informer as *"the final nail in [the series'] coffins"*, Activision announced it would discontinue all DLC sales for the series without revoking access to tracks already bought as of March 31, 2014. Though Activision had moved away from the Guitar Hero series, the lessons learned helped them and developer Toys for Bob to handle the manufacturing and outsourcing issues that came with the highly successful Skylanders toy and video game franchise.

In April 2015, Activision announced a new entry in the series, titled Guitar Hero Live. The title was developed by Activision's internal studio FreeStyleGames, who previously had worked on the DJ Hero spinoff titles. FreeStyleGames were given free rein to reboot the Guitar Hero series for next-generation consoles. One of their first innovations was to drop the standard five-button guitar controller, ultimately designing a six-button guitar controller, with two rows of three buttons each, allowing them to mimic actual guitar fingering. Guitar Hero Live was released with both a career and an online mode. The career mode used full-motion video taken from the perspective of a lead guitarist underneath the note highway, to create an immersive experience to the player. The online mode, called GHTV, discarded the previous downloadable content approach and used a music video channel approach to stream playable songs to players, adding new songs to the catalog on a weekly basis. The game was released in October 2015.

Though the game was praised as a reinvention of the Guitar Hero series, the game did not sell as well as Activision expected; due to lowered forecasts, Activision let go of about half of FreeStyleGames' developers. In January 2017, Ubisoft acquired FreeStyleGames from Activision, with unclear consequences for the game as noted by GameSpot.

Many critics believed that the number of releases of Guitar Hero games was "milking" the brand name and oversaturating the market. PaRappa the Rapper creator Masaya Matsuura stated that the video game market was growing stale and needed to move beyond games that simply challenge the player to mimic the playing of licensed music. Ryan Geddes of IGN stated that he "hit the wall with play-along music games", and challenged the game makers to explore other ways to combine music and video games. Analysts stated that such games must continue to innovate instead of just providing more songs in order to prevent "genre fatigue". Jesse Divnich of Electronic Entertainment and Design Research commented that, much like Dance Dance

Revolution, Guitar Hero and other music games explosively grew initially due to significant new features from other games but have become stagnant due to focusing on content over features, and suggested that for the genre to continue to grow, they must look to incremental changes as done with the first-person shooter genre. Former CEO for RedOctane, Kelly Sumner, believed that Activision *"abused"* the series, as *"they tried to get too much out of the franchise too quickly"*.

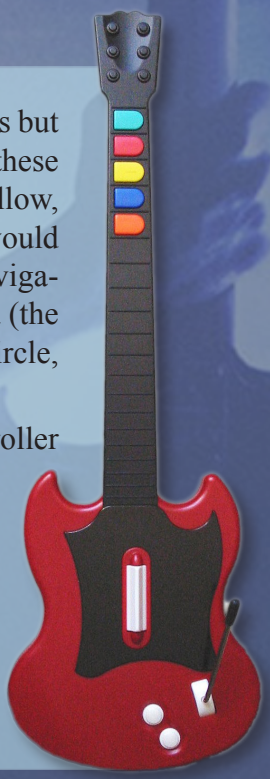
The large number of Guitar Hero and Rock Band titles on the market is considered to be partially responsible for the sharp decline of music game sales in the latter half of 2009, along with the effects of the late-2000s recession. The market for rhythm games was $1.4 billion in 2008, but dropped to $700 million in 2009 even though more titles were available that year. Former Neversoft project director Brian Bright noted that at one point in 2009, they were responsible for the release of three games that year (Guitar Hero 5, Metallica, and Band Hero) and supporting other studios for the development of two additional games, causing the studio to lose focus both in development and marketing efforts. Though Activision had originally planned on tripling the offerings of the Guitar Hero series in 2010, the company readjusted their plans, reducing the number of offerings and focusing more on selling digital downloadable content for the series. Analysts believe that the market will evolve to support a smaller number of titles each year, averaging at a *"healthy"* value $500–600 million in revenues annually. Kotick believed that part of the downfall of Guitar Hero was due to Activision's introduction of DJ Hero, which they gave too much focus and left the core Guitar Hero games without the *"nourishment and care"* needed to continue to innovate in the series.

Activision Publishing chief executive Mike Griffith, in response to questions about Activision's approach to the Guitar Hero market, noted that Guitar Hero continues to outsell the Rock Band series in both number of sales and revenue, with consumers continuing to buy the separate games on the market, and considered the market acceptance of the multiple games as validation for their model. Regardless, after releasing 25 different SKUs (between games and bundle packages) in 2009, Activision opted to reduce that number to 10 in 2010, recognizing the music game genre was not as profitable as it once was. Activision later opted to put future development of the series on hold in early 2011 citing weak sales in the rhythm game genre, a move that many journalists attributed to Activision's earlier oversaturation.

Gibson Guitar Corporation, whose guitar likenesses have appeared in the Guitar Hero series from the first game to Guitar Hero Aerosmith, informed Activision on January 7, 2008, that it believed the games infringe its U.S. Patent 5,990,405. Gibson claimed that this covers technology that simulates a concert performance via pre-recorded audio and a musical instrument. In response, Activision filed a suit seeking a declaration that it was not in violation of the Gibson patent; Activision also asserted that Gibson had given an implied license by waiting to assert the patent and that the patent was invalid. On March 17, 2008, Gibson sued six retailers (GameStop, Amazon.com, Wal-Mart, Target, Toys "R" Us and Kmart) for selling Guitar Hero products. Subsequently, on March 21, 2008, Gibson also filed a lawsuit against EA, MTV, and Harmonix over their game Rock Band also for violation of its patent, to which a Harmonix spokesperson stated that Gibson's claims are *"completely without merit"*. Activision lawyer Mary Tuck stated in their legal filings that they believe that Gibson initiated the lawsuit due to the fact that *"Activision was not [interested] in renewing the License and Marketing Support Agreement"* with Gibson Guitars. In February 2009, the United States District Court for the Central District of California ruled against Gibson in their case against Activision, stating that the controllers are not musical instruments but *"toys that represent other items"*, and that Gibson's patent only covers instruments that send out analog signals. Activision and Gibson settled the suit following this ruling.

In February 2010, Activision was sued by the Patent Compliance Group (PCG) for releasing Guitar Hero products with false patent claims, with the PCG asserting that games like Guitar Hero 5 and Band Hero were marked with up to 10 patents that are not used within the games along with several other improper patent pending claims. PCG claimed that *"Acts of false marketing deter innovation and stifle competition in the marketplace."* PCG's qui tam lawsuit was seeking up to $500 per unit sold if Activision was found liable. However, by June 2010, PCG had withdrawn the case without prejudice.

The Guitar Hero series has made a significant cultural impact, becoming a "cultural phenomenon". The series has helped to rekindle music education in children, influenced changes in both the video game and music industry, has found use in health and treatment of recovering patients, and has become part of the popular culture vernacular. Several journalists, including 1UP.com, Wired, G4TV, the San Jose Mercury News, Inc., The Guardian, and Advertising Age, considered Guitar Hero to be one of the most influential products of the first decade of the 21st century, attributing it as the spark leading to the growth of the rhythm game market, for boosting music sales for both new and old artists, for introducing more social gaming concepts to the video game market, and, in conjunction with the Wii, for improving interactivity with gaming consoles.



The officially licensed Guitar Hero guitar controllers are shaped to resemble guitars but are generally smaller than their real-life counterparts. Common features among these controllers are the set of five colored "fret" buttons on the neck (green, red, yellow, blue and orange) a "strum bar" (around where the pickups on an electric guitar would be) and whammy bar (corresponding to its real-life position) on the body. For navigation within the system menus, the strum bar acts as "up" and "down" on the d-pad (the dedicated d-pad can also be used) while the fret buttons correspond to Cross, Circle, Square, Triangle and "L1".

Guitar controllers for the PlayStation 2 may connect either to the system's controller ports or via USB; other than the original SG controllers, most PS2 controllers are wireless via a transceiver dongle.

Guitar Hero II SG

The black and white PlayStation 2 SG controller is used for Guitar Hero. The Red and black was used for Guitar Hero II. It is modeled after the Gibson SG guitar.

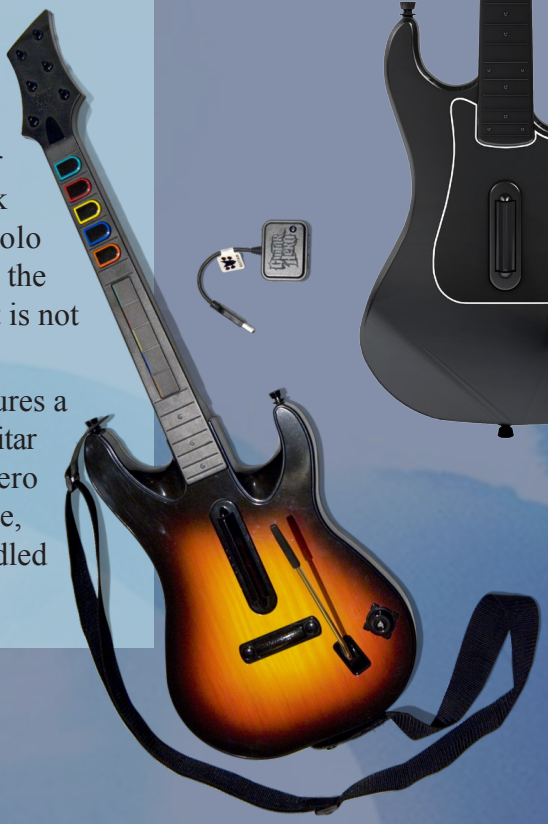
X-Plorer

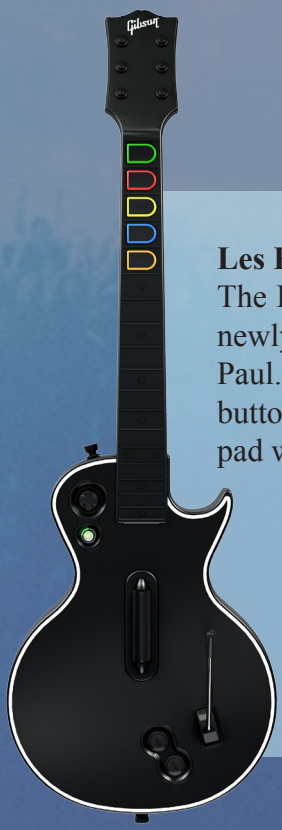
The Xbox 360 version of Guitar Hero II came bundled with a newly designed controller known as the X-Plorer controller and modeled after the Gibson Explorer guitar. Like standard controllers, the X-Plorer features an expansion port which allows users to equip a wired headset for voice communication. The controller connects to the system via a USB cable. The controller was sold bundled with the Xbox 360 version of Guitar Hero II, some Xbox 360 bundles of Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock, or available separately. It was also bundled with the Windows and Mac OS X releases of Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock.

Kramer
The PlayStation 2 version of Guitar Hero III featured a guitar controller based around the Kramer Striker guitar.

Genericaster
Guitar Hero World Tour features another new controller known as the "Genericaster". Unlike previous guitar controllers, this is not modeled after a real guitar design, but resembles a Fender Stratocaster, hence its name. As well as a new shape, it features a longer, quieter strum bar, longer whammy bar, and repositioned start and select/back buttons. It also features a new, touch sensitive "solo section" on the neck. This is functionally similar to the "solo section" on Rock Band guitar controllers, but is not compatible with Rock Band games.

Like the Guitar Hero III Les Paul controller, it features a detachable neck and customizable faceplates. This guitar was available separately, bundled with a Guitar Hero World Tour "guitar bundle" or "band bundle" (game, guitar controller, drum kit and microphone) or bundled with Guitar Hero: Metallica.





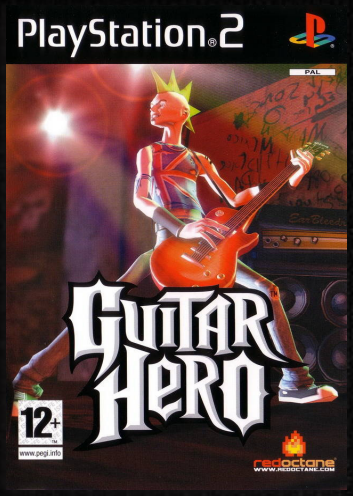
Les Paul
The PS3, Wii and Xbox 360 versions of Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock came with a newly designed wireless guitar controller which was designed to resemble a Gibson Les Paul. Both the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 versions feature a d-pad and a Home/Guide button. The Wii version, however, utilises the remote's Home button, and replaces the d-pad with an analog stick to facilitate use within the Wii's menus.

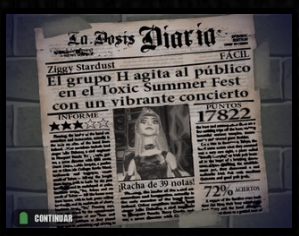
In addition to all the features of the earlier X-Plorer (Xbox 360) and SG (PS2) guitar controllers, the Les Paul controller features a detachable neck for easier storage and replacement, and customizable faceplates. The PS3 and Xbox 360 versions come with a black faceplate as standard, while the Wii version come with a white one. The controller was also available separately, and bundled with Guitar Hero: Aerosmith. The Guitar Hero: Aerosmith version features a custom faceplate.

TEEN SPIRIT
DOESN'T
SMELL LIKE 5
PLASTIC BUTTONS
sparrowguitars.com
STOP PLAYING GAMES. START PLAYING GUITAR.
SPARROW

Slash
Eric Clapton
be a Guitar Hero
SUPER
Video
LIDO
Game Store

9.1





Guitar Hero

Developer	Harmonix Music Systems
Publisher	RedOctane
Release date	(us) November 7, 2005
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

Guitar Hero is the first entry in the Guitar Hero series. The game's development was a result of collaboration between RedOctane and Harmonix to bring a Guitar Freaks-like game to America.

Guitar Hero's main mode of play is Career Mode, where the player and in-game band travel between various fictional performance arenas and perform sets of four or five songs. Completing songs in this mode unlocks the songs for play within the other game modes. Players can choose their on-stage character and their guitar; these elements have no effect on gameplay but affect the visuals during the performance. In Career Mode, players can earn money from their performances that is redeemable at the in-game store, where bonus content, such as additional songs, guitars and finishes, can be unlocked. Quick Play mode allows the player to play any unlocked track, selecting the difficulty, the character, venue and guitar. After successfully completing a song in either Career or Quick Play mode, the player is given a score and a rating between three-five stars, depending on his or her overall performance.

Multiplayer mode offers two players the chance to compete against each other on the same song. Two fret boards will appear on screen, one for each player, as they alternate playing sections of the song in a dueling manner. The player with the highest score at the end of the song wins.

The four difficulty levels for each song afford players a learning curve in order to help them progress in skill. The first difficulty level, Easy, only focuses on the first three fret buttons while displaying a significantly reduced amount of notes for the player to play. Medium introduces a fourth fret button while adding more notes, and Hard includes the final fret button while adding additional notes. Expert does not introduce any other frets to learn, but adds more notes in a manner designed to challenge the player.

Guitar Hero features 47 playable songs, 30 of which are "main setlist" tracks that are covers of popular songs. Featured tracks include "Iron Man" by Black Sabbath, "Take Me Out" by Franz Ferdinand, "Spanish Castle Magic" by Jimi Hendrix, "Bark at the Moon" by Ozzy Osbourne, "Smoke on the Water" by Deep Purple, "Crossroads" by Cream, and "Fat Lip" by Sum 41. All cover tracks are credited on screen with the phrase "as made famous by" (e.g., "'I Wanna Be Sedated', as made famous by The Ramones"). The other 17 songs are master recordings selected from indie groups.

According to Rob Kay, the game's Lead Designer, the idea of Guitar Hero was directly inspired by Konami's Guitar Freaks arcade game, where the player used a guitar-shaped controller to interact with the game. At the time, GuitarFreaks had not seen much exposure in North America. RedOctane was making dance pads for games like Dance Dance Revolution for home consoles and also operated an online video rental service similar to Netflix. RedOctane's Kai

and Charles Huang recognized the popularity of GuitarFreaks in Japan through their rental service, and planned to create guitar controllers to bring the game to North America. The Huangs raised $1.75 million for the effort, despite being turned down by some investors who *"thought [the idea] was too weird"*. Greg Fischbach, one of the founders of Acclaim Entertainment, noted, regretfully several years later, they had passed on Guitar Hero, questioning *"Who's going to buy a peripheral like that?"* The Huangs approached Harmonix, who had previously made music video games such as Frequency, Amplitude and Karaoke Revolution about making a guitar-based video game for those controllers. With a budget of about one million dollars (which Kay noted was *"pretty tiny for a video game"*), the two companies worked together to develop Guitar Hero. Kay noted that *"No one had any notions about it being a massive success; we all just thought it would be fun to do."* Harmonix's president Alex Rigopulos also claims that former Microsoft vice-president of game publishing Ed Fries indirectly influenced the game's creation, who had previously told Harmonix when they were pitching Frequency to Microsoft that no music-rhythm game would succeed without custom hardware for it, prompting Rigopulos to investigate the Guitar Hero opportunity when it arose.

The team quickly recognized that *"the controller really was the kind of magic sauce for what we wanted to do"*. They identified three aspects of gameplay that they felt made the game stand out. These aspects included the note-matching aspect and the showmanship created by the use of the whammy bar and tilting of the guitar within the game. The third key aspect was the use of Star Power *"to provide a little more depth to the game — some replay value, some interest for people as they were playing beyond just hitting the notes"*. Harmonix used third party controllers made for GuitarFreaks that were already on the market for development of the game until RedOctane had prepared prototypes for the Guitar Hero controller. The controller initially had pressure-sensitive fret buttons to mimic the playing of a real guitar, but the idea was dropped as it made the gameplay too complex. The idea of using the whammy bar to boost Star Power, in addition to altering the pitch of sustained notes was only realized about a month before the completion of the game. The team had spent *"precious development time and resources"* into creating a free-style model that would have allowed players to improvise during songs but ultimately cut it as they could not work the feature into the existing gameplay.

"Gem tracks", the pattern of notes for a song, were developed by a team in Harmonix, taking usually a day to develop the tracks for one song. Tracks were designed to include key notes to *"make [the player] feel as if [he is] a brilliant musician"*. Software algorithms were used to assess the difficulty of the tracks, and the quality assurance team helped to rebalance the tracks for accuracy and difficulty. The software also allowed Harmonix to quickly make changes to the set list or to recreate the tracks for a song to make sure the overall difficulty of the game was appropriate.

At the onset of development, the team did not have any idea of what songs would be present in the final game. Kay noted that *"We wanted 30 or 40 songs for the game and put a hundred on our wish list."* The game was to focus mostly on hard rock songs, but the team was limited by what could be licensed. The team also felt *"morally obligated"* to include older, classic rock

songs like The Ramones' "I Wanna Be Sedated" to the younger target audience of the game. Harmonix had to modify the track list throughout development as certain songs were introduced or removed based on licensing issues, requiring the team to repeatedly balance difficulty and popularity of the track list. WaveGroup Sound were used to create the covers of the licensed songs provided in the game. Marcus Henderson of the band Drist provided many of the lead guitar tracks for the covers. WaveGroup Sound also went to efforts to try to recreate effects for some songs. In the case of Black Sabbath's "Iron Man", the team learned that the vocal effects were created by having Ozzy Osbourne sing from behind a metal fan. The team sought out the same model of fan through Craigslist to generate the same effect in the game's cover. Many of the bonus songs were from groups that Harmonix employees were part of or knew. Additionally, a "Be a Guitar Hero" contest was held allowing bands to submit their own song to be included in the game. The winning song was "Cheat on the Church" by Graveyard BBQ. Black Label Society's song, "Fire it Up", was included two weeks before the game was completed at the request of Zakk Wylde. The final song list was set very near to the shipping date.

Guitar Hero started with *"super-basic Pong-style graphics"* for the game display. The final game art was led by Ryan Lesser, using the art team's involvement in the music scene. Based on the experience from Frequency and Amplitude, the team realized that *"people don't necessarily relate to really abstract visuals"*, and included the depictions of live performances as previously used in Karaoke Revolution. House of Moves were used to assist in creation motion capture for the on-screen animations. The appearance of Star Power was made to resemble electricity, both to reflect the use of the electric guitar as well to conceptually demonstrate the excitement of the performance and the virtual audience.

Guitar Hero was initially released to retail stores in a bundle that packaged the game disc and a Gibson SG guitar controller, priced at $69.99. Since its release, stand-alone copies of the games and the guitar controller have been released, including both RedOctane and third-party controllers from TAC and Nyko. MadCatz, another controller company that has produced guitar controllers, was set to initially be part of the game's development, creating a version of the game for the Xbox, but had to pull out due to a lawsuit by Komani; MadCatz's Darrel Richardson stated they had to pay $300,000 to get out of their contract with RedOctane.

Guitar Hero received critical acclaim upon release. It received a score of 91.96% on GameRankings and 91/100 on Metacritic. IGN praised the *"fantastic soundtrack"* and *"great peripheral"*, further commenting that mini-Gibson SG controller *"is what makes Guitar Hero,*

oed these sentiments, stating Guitar Hero had a *"great guitar controller"* and *"killer soundtrack"* and was possibly the *"best rhythm game ever made"*. Many reviews praised the game's gradual learning curve and difficulty approach through the song tier progression and the difficulty setting for each song. Play said the game *"gives bedroom air guitarists a chance to live out their rock 'n' roll fantasies"*. GameSpy's review commented on the length of the songs, in that *"once you hit the three minute mark or so, things start to feel 'too long'"*. Eurogamer said, *"the lack of international star quality about the roster of songs and the absence of the original artists is perhaps the only thing that may detract from the package from an importer's perspective"* and *"it would have been truly amazing with a better track list"*.

Shortly after release, Guitar Hero became an unexpected hit; it was the second-highest-selling PlayStation 2 title in February 2006 according to the NPD Group. Game sales amounted to $45 million in 2005. Since then, the game has sold about 1.53 million copies through December 2007. The success of the game has spawned a one billion dollar Guitar Hero franchise, including sequels on several seventh generation consoles, expansions, a mobile phone-based version, and a portable version for the Nintendo DS. Harmonix no longer is involved in development of the series, due to its acquisition by MTV. Harmonix has since developed Rock Band using designs similar to those that based Guitar Hero's success.

Guitar Hero has won several awards. In IGN's "Best of 2005", the game was recognized for "Best Music Game", "Best PlayStation 2 Music Game", "Best Licensed Soundtrack", "Best Licensed Soundtrack for PlayStation 2", "Best Offline Multiplayer Game", "Best PlayStation 2 Offline Multiplayer Game", and "Best Gaming Peripheral" (for the Mini Gibson SG controller). GameSpot also recognized the game in its "Best and Worst of 2005", awarding it honors for "Best Puzzle/Rhythm Game", "Most Metal", and "Reader's Choice – Best Puzzle/Rhythm Game". The Game Developers Choice Awards honored Guitar Hero for "Excellence in Audio" and "Excellence in Game Innovation". The Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences' 2005 Interactive Achievement Awards honored the game with awards for "Game of the Year", "Outstanding Achievement in Game Design", "Outstanding Achievement in Game Play Engineering" (tie), and "Outstanding Achievement in Soundtrack". Guitar Hero also won "Best Soundtrack" at the 2005 Spike TV Video Game Awards.

game in its "Best and Worst of 2005", awarding it honors for "Best Puzzle/Rhythm Game", "Most Metal", and "Reader's Choice – Best Puzzle/Rhythm Game". The Game Developers Choice Awards honored Guitar Hero for "Excellence in Audio" and "Excellence in Game Innovation". The Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences' 2005 Interactive Achievement Awards honored the game with awards for "Game of the Year", "Outstanding Achievement in Game Design", "Outstanding Achievement in Game Play Engineering" (tie), and "Outstanding Achievement in Soundtrack". Guitar Hero also won "Best Soundtrack" at the 2005 Spike TV Video Game Awards.

The game feature two hidden tracks that can only be unlocked through the use of a PlayStation 2 cheat device, such as GameShark, CodeBreaker or Action Replay. The tracks are; "Trippolette" - Andrew Buch (a member of the RedOctane team) and "Graveyard Shift" - Windtunnel Syndrome.

SYMPHONY OF DESTRUCTION

by: PlayStation 2 Official Magazine (AU) 2006 October #58

While we're certainly counting the sleeps until the launch of the PS3, there's another juggernaut set to collide with Earth this November. *Guitar Hero II*, the hard rocking sequel to arguably the greatest PS2 game of the past 12 months is tuning up, and we caught up with Charles Huang, chief operating officer of publisher RedOctane, to get some insight into the game's development.

OPS2: *Guitar Hero* is one of the most innovative games in recent memory. It's gone on to be a huge critical and commercial smash hit, but did it ever seem like a risk to produce it?
CH: A lot of people were certainly very sceptical of *Guitar Hero* - it's a difficult concept to sell to people until you can actually put it in their hands. But tall that changed once the reviews started emerging, and we were getting such great write-ups in the press. And then when it was released in the US last year we were struggling to produce enough units to meet demand.

OPS2: We gave *Guitar Hero* a 10 out of 10, and beyond adding extra songs we didn't really feel there was much you needed to improve on. So how have you gone about making a sequel to top it?
CH: More songs, more modes and more guitar. So obviously there's a brand new soundtrack that's bigger than the previous game, and it's also of a higher quality because now we can actually take the original *Guitar Hero* to the bands and show them exactly how their songs will be used, so it's easier to convince them to allow us to use their songs. We've also got plenty of extra modes; there's co-op with separate instruments, and the 'Shred School', which is a practice mode that lets you slow down certain passages of a song such as a solo in order to make it easier to learn them. Finally, we've got more guitar; that is lead and rhythm or bass parts for each song and three button chords.

OPS2: Given that there's only five fret buttons on the SG controller, would you consider it feasible to integrate the ability to improvise during a lead break?
CH: There have been some interesting hacks within the fan community; people have written programs for the PC that allows you to plug in your SG controller and create your music. We've even had talks with Gibson Guitars about making a full sized guitar controller with more fret buttons, so it's something that we're always exploring. But to this day we still haven't come up with the ideal way to incorporate improvising into *Guitar Hero*. We're working on it.

OPS2: What about the career mode in *Guitar Hero II*? Will it be deeper than in the original?
CH: The career mode is indeed expanded in *Guitar Hero II*; there'll be much more details in the stories. There's also a couple of new venues, artist endorsements and three new characters; Rockabilly, Heavy Metal and Rocker Girl. So the career mode robust than it was in the original game, and we still have a few ideas for how we can increase the realism of the road stardom. But we've definitely placed a heavier emphasis on the multiplayer aspects, based on user feedback we're definitely aware that *Guitar Hero* has become a much more popular multiplayer game than we originally intended it to be.

OPS2: How do you select the tracks themselves? Are the certain tracks that despite being great songs, just don't work as *Guitar Hero* songs?
CH: Everybody tends to have their favourite song from certain artists - their favourite AC/DC song, their favourite Metallica song, and so on. But what we try to do is listen to a broad selection of tracks from each artist, and then try and pinpoint which song is going to be more fun to play. For example, a lot of people really love Black Sabbath's 'Paranoid' and it's an amazing song, but it's actually pretty boring to play. So that's why some of the songs we have might not be the most famous or popular from that particular artist, but they're the songs that play the best in *Guitar Hero*.

OPS2: Speaking of AC/DC; will we be able to live out our Angus Young fantasies in *Guitar Hero II*? Or will any other Aussie artists be included, such as the so-hot-right-now Wolfmother?
CH: AC/DC are definitely high up on our list. We've pitched the idea to them several times, but we haven't been able to work out anything yet. But we're definitely trying to get a more international

flavour this time. The original game consisted of predominately North American and British bands, but for the sequel we're definitely trying to get some Aussie bands and some other territories, but nothing's confirmed yet.

OPS2: During the development of the original *Guitar Hero* there was talk of a wah-pedal attachment. It is possible that add-ons like this will see the light of day?

CH: Not for *Guitar Hero II*, unfortunately. But the wah-pedal still remains a possibility for next-gen. We're always looking for ways to add to the authenticity of being an actual guitar hero, and in particular it's a challenge for us to say ahead of the expert players. So for *Guitar Hero II* we've ramped up the the difficulty of the expert mode. So adding pedals to the next-gen of *Guitar Hero* could definitely make it more authentic and challenging.

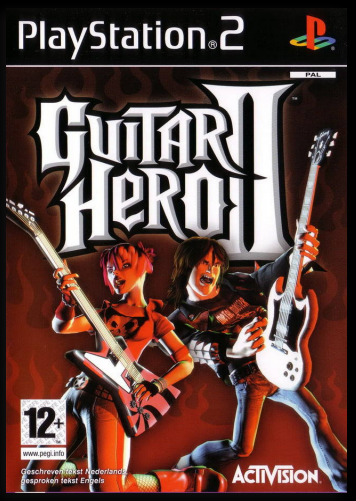
OPS2: Will the *Guitar Hero* franchise go down the same road as *SingStar*; with *Guitar Hero Metal*, *Guitar Hero Country* and so on?

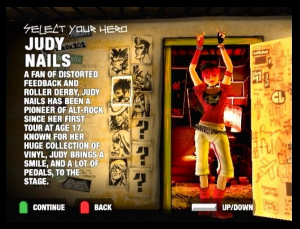
CH: We are looking at taking a similar path to the *SingStar* series for PS2 with different genres of music. But PS3 offers up a lot of interesting possibilities with downloadable songs - we wouldn't necessarily have to put out 40 or 50 songs at a time in order to introduce new music to the fans, we could do it incrementally online.

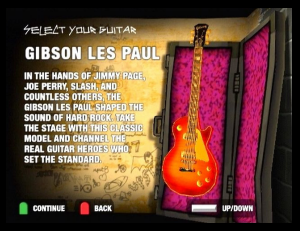
OPS2: Since the success of the original game, have you had artists or bands actually approach you trying to get their songs into your games?

CH: Yes, we've had a lot of bands that have come to us this time instead of vice versa. We've been surprised how far out the Guitar Hero phenomenon has reached. We pitch the game to artists as being a game strictly about their music; it isn't in the background like in a racing game or something, their music is front and centre. The game is essentially giving players the feeling that they actually are Eric Clapton, or Brian May, or whoever. And most musicians really dig the idea and want to be part of it. I think it's the reason we were able to get Jimi Hendrix's 'Spanish Castle Magic' into the first game - that's the only time a Jimi Hendrix track has been approved by his family for use in a videogame, so it was definitely an honour for us.

9.2







Guitar Hero II

Developer	Harmonix Music Systems
Publisher	RedOctane, (au) Activision
Release date	(us) November 7, 2006
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

Guitar Hero II is the second installment in the Guitar Hero series. It was first released for the PS2, and then for the Xbox 360 in April 2007, with additional content not originally in the PS2 version.

Gameplay is based on the successful formula created for the first Guitar Hero game but several changes have been made to the gameplay mechanics for Guitar Hero II: hammer-on and pull-off functionality has been improved, and three note chords have been introduced, scored as triple points if played correctly. There are additional statistics available for a song upon completion, and the scores achieved in either Quick Play or Career mode are saved to the same in-game high-score list. The handedness of the guitar can now be toggled from the Pause menu when playing a song (previously, this was only available from the game's main menu).

In Career mode, players create a band name and select a guitarist from among the available characters. Eight characters, each representing a unique genre of rock music - are available from the start of the game: Eddie Knox, Axel Steel, Casey Lynch, Lars Ümlaüt, Izzy Sparks, Judy Nails, Johnny Napalm, and Pandora. Additional characters can also be purchased, allowing them to be used in later sessions.

Only the lead guitar is available to be played in the Career mode. Over the course of the Career mode the band plays at eight available venues. The venue system from the original game has been altered slightly and has the band traveling geographically from town to town in order to play at the next arena. The venues are Nilbog High School, The Rat Cellar Pub, The Blackout Bar, The RedOctane Club, the Rock City Theater, the Vans Warped Tour, Harmonix Arena and Stonehenge. The venues feature lighting and pyrotechnics that are synchronized with the music.

Not all songs in the main setlist are available from the start. Once a song is unlocked for play within Career Mode, it becomes available for play in all other modes. When working through Career Mode at a specific difficulty level, the next tier of songs is unlocked once the required number of songs on the current tier (3-5, depending on difficulty and console) are completed. Additionally, the encore song for a particular tier is only made available once its requirements are completed. On the Easy difficulty setting, there are no encores available, but the next tier will be unlocked immediately after completing the required songs in the previous tier.

Successful completion of a song on Medium or higher difficulty during Career mode will earn the player in-game cash. Higher difficulty levels and better scoring performances are rewarded with more cash. In-game money can be used at The Store to buy various items. Some items are available only after completing all songs at higher difficulty levels or 5-star performances. Within The Store, the player can purchase new Gibson guitars, guitar finishes, three additional characters, alternate outfits for the eight characters available from the

start, bonus songs, and videos. For unknown reasons, the bonus videos are absent from the PAL version of the game. Within the Xbox 360 version, there is also an option to access the Guitar Hero II content on the Xbox Live Marketplace.

There are three different multiplayer modes available:

Cooperative. One player plays lead guitar while another plays either bass guitar or rhythm guitar, depending on the song. Both players share a score, rock meter, star power meter, and streak multiplier. Cooperative mode is the only multiplayer mode in which a song can be failed. Star power can only be activated by both players simultaneously.

Face-Off. This is the same multiplayer mode as featured in the original game, though in Guitar Hero II both players can select their own level of difficulty. In this mode, players alternate between playing sections of the selected song. The scores are weighted so that a player who hits fewer notes on Easy difficulty may not necessarily lose against an opponent on Expert difficulty who hits more notes.

Pro Face-Off. Players play the full lead guitar track on the same difficulty. For the PlayStation 2 mode, this is available upon completion of any career level, while for the Xbox 360 version, the mode is unlocked after completing the career mode at Easy level or higher. The score system is identical as the song could be played alone, but songs cannot be failed in this mode.

Practice mode is a new addition to the game, allowing a player to practice certain sections of a song ("Verse 2," "Chorus," "Bridge 3," "Gtr Solo 4," etc.) on different difficulties and instruments. Practice mode gives the player the ability to toggle the speed of the notes (Full Speed, Slow, Slower and Slowest) and does not stop a song no matter how many mistakes are made. Players can play the bass guitar lines on most songs. On others, a rhythm guitar line is available instead.

Both the PlayStation 2 and Xbox 360 versions of Guitar Hero II feature the same core 64 playable songs (40 licensed, 24 bonus songs). Among the featured tracks are "You Really Got Me" by Van Halen, "Sweet Child O' Mine" by Guns N' Roses, "Girlfriend" by Matthew Sweet, "Woman" by Wolfmother, "War Pigs" by Black Sabbath, and "Free Bird" by Lynyrd Skynyrd. The Xbox 360 version of the game contains 10 exclusive tracks not included in the PS2 version. The Xbox 360 version also features a reorganized set list that provides a more balanced progression in difficulty.

Most of the songs featured in the main set list are cover versions, with the exception of "Stop!", "Possum Kingdom", "Dead!", and "John the Fisherman"; these four are based on master recordings. The unlockable bonus songs are all master recordings, including some specifically arranged for use within Guitar Hero II. Cover songs are credited on screen with the phrase "as made famous by" (for example, "Heart-Shaped Box, as made famous by Nirvana"), while the original songs are credited with "as performed by" (for example, "John the Fisherman, as performed by Primus").

Guitar Hero II features many popular real world Gibson, Epiphone, and Kramer guitars, including the Gibson Les Paul, Gibson SG, Gibson Flying V, (these three being the only ones available from the start) Gibson Sonex 180 and Gibson Explorer. Oddities such as the double necked Gibson EDS-1275 and unusual looking Gibson Corvus also make an appearance. Several available finishes are also recognizable from popular guitarists, including Zakk Wylde's bullseye Les Paul. As play progress-

es, several custom shaped guitars become available, although some are notable in the real world such as the USA and Battle Axe (a similar looking bass is played by Gene Simmons, and the guitar was played by John Christ of Samhain/Danzig fame). Basses, such as the Music Man StingRay, Gibson Thunderbird, and the Höfner bass (as made famous by Paul McCartney, the bassist for the Beatles) are also available for co-op play.

The band itself plays with Orange amps and DW drum kits, along with more in-game endorsements. When the player passes each set of songs in career mode, his/her band is rewarded with money and equipment endorsements, including Ernie Ball strings, Boss effects, Line 6 guitar amplifiers, VHT amplifiers, Mesa Boogie amplifiers, and Roland keyboards. These products then appear on stage while the band plays the ensuing setlists.

The PlayStation 2 version of Guitar Hero II was critically acclaimed. It received a 10/10 review in the December 2006 issue of Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine and was awarded the Game of the Month award. The game received a rating of 9.5/10 from IGN, ranking higher than the original game in the series and amongst IGN's highest rated PlayStation 2 games ever. IGN would later include it on their 2007 list of "The Top 100 Games of All Time" at #49. GameSpot reviewed the game with a rating of 8.7/10, slightly lower than its predecessor. Game Informer gave it a 9/10, while its "second opinion" rating was better, at 9.25/10. According to GameRankings, the average critic score of Guitar Hero II is 93%, making it the 9th best reviewed game of 2006. The Australian video game talk show Good Game's two reviewers gave the game a 9/10 and 10/10.

The Xbox 360 version has earned similarly positive reviews and slightly higher scores. But the downloadable song packs for the Xbox 360 version have been criticized for being too pricey.

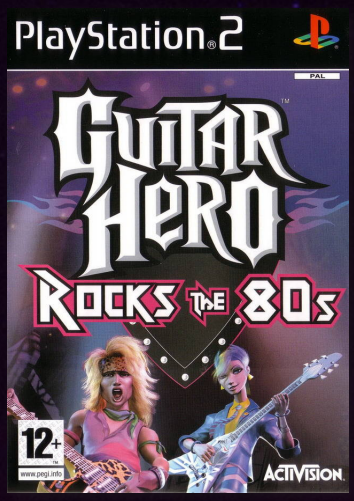
Common praise for the game by critics is aimed at the new multiplayer and practice modes. Common critiques concern the song list, which includes more hard rock and metal than the previous game, deeming it less accessible to casual players. Other common critiques concern the quality of the covers.

In December 2006, Guitar Hero II for PlayStation 2 was the second best-selling video game of the month, selling 805,200 units. It was outsold only by Gears of War for Xbox 360, which sold 815,700 units. It was the fifth best-selling video game of the fiscal year of 2006, with 1.3 million copies sold. It was also the third best-selling game for the PlayStation 2, behind Madden NFL 07 and Kingdom Hearts II. Total sales of the game during 2006 were $200 million.

Guitar Hero Encore: Rocks the 80s

Developer	Harmonix Music Systems
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) July 24, 2007
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

6.9



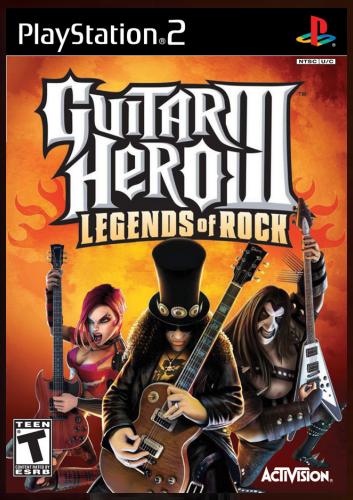
Guitar Hero Encore: Rocks the 80s (titled Guitar Hero: Rocks the 80s in Europe) is the third installment in the popular Guitar Hero series.

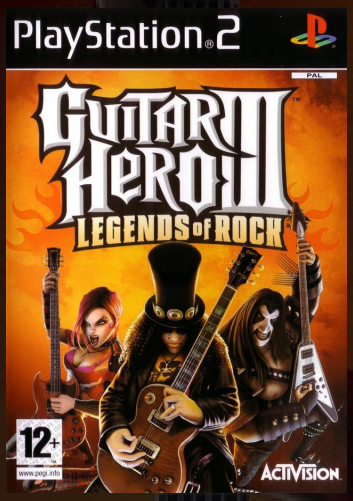
The mechanics of the game are nearly identical to that of its predecessor, Guitar Hero II; an early preview of the game described it as *"more like an expansion pack for Guitar Hero II than a new game in its own right"*. Major differences to Guitar Hero II are mostly aesthetic. Six characters from previous Guitar Hero games return with character designs influenced by styles of the 1980s. Venues from Guitar Hero II (with the exception of RedOctane Club and Stonehenge) have been redesigned with an 80s influence, and the interface mimics Guitar Hero II's, only with color changes (no "new" graphics were developed as far as the interface).

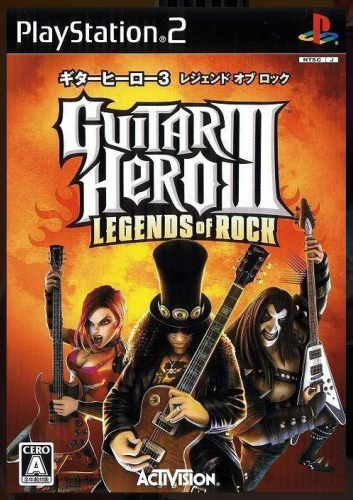
All of the tracks, excluding "Because, It's Midnite", were released during the 1980s, as the game's title suggests; "Because, It's Midnite" is performed by the fictional "80s hair metal" band Limozeen from the Internet cartoon Homestar Runner (Harmonix co-founder/CEO Alex Rigopulos is a professed fan of Homestar Runner). Two songs were originally written in the 1970s, but were covered by bands in the 1980s. These songs are "Radar Love" by Golden Earring, but covered by White Lion and "Ballroom Blitz" by Sweet and covered by Krokus. The song list includes tracks such as "Round and Round" by Ratt, "Metal Health" by Quiet Riot, "Holy Diver" by Dio, "Heat of the Moment" by Asia and "Nothin' But a Good Time" by Poison. Five of the songs are master tracks: "Because It's Midnite", "I Ran (So Far Away)" by A Flock of Seagulls, Scandal's "The Warrior", Twisted Sister's "I Wanna Rock", and Judas Priest's "Electric Eye", while the rest are covers.

After the successful release of Guitar Hero II, RedOctane announced they were looking into genre-specific expansions to the series. Guitar Hero Encore: Rocks the 80s is the first of these genre-specific titles.

8.2

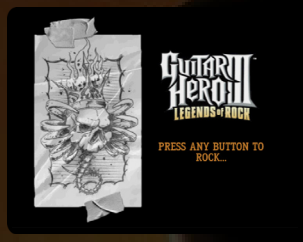






JNP

Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock



Developer	Neversoft Entertainment
Publisher	RedOctane, (au, jp) Activision
Release date	(us) October 28, 2007
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock is the third main installment in the Guitar Hero series, and the fourth title overall. The game was published by Activision and distributed by RedOctane. It is the first game in the series to be developed by Neversoft after Activision's acquisition of RedOctane and MTV Games' purchase of Harmonix, the previous development studio for the series. The game was released worldwide for the PS2, PlS3, Wii and Xbox 360.

Gameplay is similar to previous titles in the series.

The game has a cast of thirteen characters, which the player can further customize with alternate guitar skins and stage outfits using in-game money earned from successful performances. The player can access the game's three boss characters—Tom Morello, Slash, and Lou the Devil—as playable characters once they have completed their respective Boss Battles in Career mode. Although Bret Michaels appears in the game and sings specific songs, he is not a playable character in the game.

The single-player Career mode features 8 tiers with 42 songs total. Within each tier, the player completes a number of songs, the number depending on the selected difficulty level, before they are offered an encore performance of one additional song and complete the tier. After a tier is complete, a new tier is introduced. The game includes Career mode boss battles based on the game's multiplayer Battle mode; at three points during the Career mode, the player must compete against a boss character to progress. Each successfully completed song earns in-game money that the player uses at the game's store to unlock new characters, outfits, guitars and finishes, bonus songs, and videos. Additionally, completing a song in Career mode unlocks it for play in all other game modes.

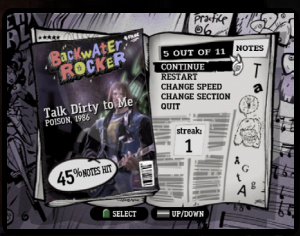
Guitar Hero III is the first game in the series to feature a storyline for the Career mode, portrayed through animated cartoon scenes between venues produced by Titmouse, Inc. Studios. The band starts as a neighborhood sensation, and after signing a recording contract with a shady music producer named Lou, gains worldwide fame, performing at venues around the world. However, when the band attempts to break the contract, Lou reveals himself to be the Devil, and their recording contract is actually a contract for their souls. Lou forces the band to play against him in the netherworld at "Lou's Inferno", but the band is able to succeed, forcing Lou to break the contract. The band returns to the mortal world as "Rock Legends".

Two players can participate in Co-Op Career mode, with one player on lead guitar and the other on bass or rhythm guitar depending on the song. There are six tiers of songs which the players complete in the same manner as the single player Career mode. The encore song for each tier is unique to Co-Op Career mode. There are no boss battles in this mode. The animated Co-Op storyline portrays the vocalist and drummer, who are

looking for a guitarist and bassist. After their first performance, the drummer decides to make a video of the band. The video helps boost the band's popularity, and they soon earn a gig in Japan. The band is forced to take a three-month hiatus to reconcile their differences of opinion on the band's future. Their comeback performance starts a neighborhood fire and places the band in jail. Lou arrives, offering the band to be freed from jail if they perform for the inmates. However, after their performance, the band finds themselves in Lou's Inferno, and is forced to play a live show for the netherworld in order to return to the mortal world.

Guitar Hero III was bundled with newly developed wireless guitar controllers for the console releases, though previous controllers from other Guitar Hero games could be used. Lee Guinchard, RedOctane's vice president of hardware, stated that wireless controllers were the *"first, foremost consideration"* for the game. The Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 version of the controller was modeled after a black Les Paul guitar, with faceplates that can be swapped out. The Wii version is also a Les Paul design, but features a special slot to insert the Wii Remote into. PlayStation 2 guitar is based on a Kramer Striker model, and uses a dongle to achieve wireless functionality. All models features a detachable guitar neck that would make it easier to transport the controller. The PC and Mac versions of the game are bundled with the same USB-based Gibson X-plorer model that shipped with Guitar Hero II.

The game features 73 playable songs; 42 are part of the main setlist, 6 are exclusive to the Co-Op Career mode, and the remaining 25 are bonus tracks. In total, 54 of the game's songs are master recordings. In addition, Slash and Morello both wrote and recorded original battle music for the game. Guitarists Steve Ouimette, Ed DeGenaro and Geoff Tyson play as Lou the Devil for the final battle, and re-recorded a metal guitar version of "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" for that purpose. The soundtrack features songs such as "Paint It Black" by The Rolling Stones, "Cherub Rock" by The Smashing Pumpkins, "Sabotage" by Beastie Boys, "The Metal" by Tenacious D, "My Name is Jonas" by Weezer, "Rock and Roll All Nite" by Kiss, "School's Out" by Alice Cooper, "Talk Dirty to Me" by Poison, "Slow Ride" by Foghat, "Barracuda" by Heart, and "Down 'n Dirty" by L.A. Slum Lords. It also features re-recordings of "Anarchy in the U.K." by Sex Pistols and "Cult of Personality" by Living Colour specifically for Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock, as the original master tracks could not be found. This game is the first in the series to feature a bonus track (The Stone Roses' "She Bangs the Drums") that is not an original recording.



Activision purchased RedOctane in 2006 for $100 million to achieve *"an early leadership position in music-based gaming"*. In September of that year, MTV acquired Harmonix, the developer of all Guitar Hero games up to that point; this purchase would later lead to the development of the competing music-game series, Rock Band. Without Harmonix's availability, Activision selected Neversoft Entertainment to develop Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock. Neversoft president Joel Jewett stated his company was asked to develop the game because of a conversation that Jewett had with RedOctane's founders Kai and Charles Huang at the 2006 E3 Convention, in which Jewett mentioned how the first Guitar Hero game helped reduce the stress in the Neversoft offices during their development of Tony Hawk's Project 8. Several months later, Jewett was

contacted by the Huangs, asking if Neversoft wanted to work on Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock. Dusty Welch, head of publishing at RedOctane, recognized Neversoft had a *"10-year track record of launching a game every single year and being in the top of the charts"* and felt that the development group *"brought a better and deeper sense of music sensibilities"* to the series. Despite the experience from the previous games, Alan Flores, head of development at Neversoft, commented that the game was *"deceptively simple"* and that it took much work for their 30-person team to recreate the gameplay for Guitar Hero III. Though they *"wanted to take the Guitar Hero experience to the next level"* by adding additional instruments in the same manner as Rock Band, they opted to focus on perfecting the guitar gameplay. In 2010, Activision CEO Bobby Kotick stated that they believed Neversoft would help them to develop great games for the series, but has since come to regret their failure to seek Harmonix for further development responsibility and believed this would have been a better move for both companies.

The note tracks, on-stage motions of the band, and stage lighting and effect synchronization were created by the same team of developers who were all musicians and had previous experience in note tracking either from other music video games or from MIDI tracking. The note tracks were developed by placing notes in time with the song; for sections that had difficult parts to track within the game's engine, they opted to use sequences of notes that would seem to the match the music but still be playable. Hammer-ons and pull-offs ("HOPOs") for the previous Guitar Hero games were automatically placed by the software; in this iteration, the engine was designed to allow manual placement of HOPOs to make it easier to create certain effects in songs, such as sustained string bends. Character animations were selected from several made available by the animation team, while stage lighting and effects were selected to mimic those used in live performances from YouTube or from concert appearances. A separate team came up with the concepts for the various stages and arenas in the game. The team wanted keep the same art style as the previous Guitar Hero games but add *"a certain spark"* to improve upon previous designs. Once a stage idea was brainstormed, the team sought visual references from real stages to expand upon, and a 2D drawing of the envisioned stage was prepared for review and to remain a constant goal of the stage design. From that, a "pop up" three-dimensional version of the stage was created, and elements from the 2D concept art were added to deter-

mine the appropriate placement of set decorations. This team worked with the animation department to place the band members, stage lighting, and other effects in the game before the final 3D version of the stage was completed. The final stages included several animated elements to help further bring the stage to life.

For the game's characters, the developers intended to keep the comical looks from the previous games, but they decided to update their appearances with realistic materials and textures to take advantage of the more powerful level of graphics capabilities of seventh-generation consoles. The designers first drew character sketches to determine the characters' looks and clothing, creating a main and an alternate outfit for each character, which were then made into reference artwork. Afterward, low-level meshes for each character were created, with details added with Zbrush, resulting in characters that, before being scaled down for the game environment, had more than six million polygons. Texture of Couches and pixel shaders were added using the team's previous work on Tony Hawk's Project 8 to match the style of earlier Guitar Hero games. Unlike the Tony Hawk games, each character in the game was given a unique skeleton to match their variations in sizes and shapes, allowing the animators to create unique moves for individual characters. Guitar Hero III introduces three new characters modeled after real-life musicians. Slash, Tom Morello, and Bret Michaels, each performing one or more songs from their past recordings. All three were brought into the game using motion capture from the Motion Analysis Corporation.

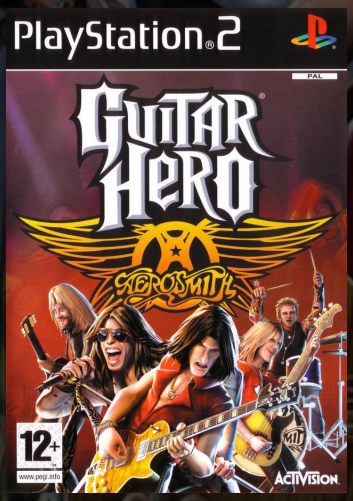
Activision called Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock its *"largest product launch ever"*, selling more than 1.4 million copies, and making over $100 million in its first week of release in North America; another 1.9 million copies were sold in the following month. Subsequently, the company was concerned that they were unable to meet the game's demand for the 2007 holiday season. As of July 15, 2008, the game has sold more than eight million copies. During the first seven months of 2008, the game sold 3.037 million units in the United States, 412,000 in the United Kingdom, and 26,000 in Japan, for a total of 3.475 million units, according to the NPD Group, GfK Chart-Track, and Enterbrain. At the 2009 Consumer Electronics Show, Activision CEO Mike Griffith stated that Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock is the first retail video game to exceed one billion dollars in sales. According to accumulated data from NPD Group in January 2010, Guitar Hero III is the second best-selling video game in the United States since 1995, following Wii Play. In March 2011, the title had become the top selling game with $830.9 million in lifetime sales.

Guitar Hero III received acclaim from critics and fans, although it scored lower than its predecessors on review aggregator Metacritic. The Gibson Les Paul controller included with the game's bundled version received particular praise. GameSpy, in a review of the four console versions, favorable reviewed the new controllers.

Several reviews criticized the changes made to Guitar Hero III compared to previous games in the Guitar Hero series. GameDaily questioned the *"white boy soundtrack"* and would have liked to have seen more tracks from legends like Jimi Hendrix and Prince in the mix. GameSpy criticized some of the difficulty tweaks in the game. They stated that *"Medium simply feels like Hard-minus-the-orange-button,"* and that the Star Power phrases were too long, comparing the overall game to a *"trial by fire"* in contrast to the previous games in the series. GameSpot criticized the game for its *"heavy dose of in-game advertising."* GameSpy stated that the PlayStation 2 version received *"the short end of the stick"* because of a lack of online play.

In November 2010, Axl Rose sued Activision for $20 million for misuse of Guns N' Roses music and its musicians (specifically Slash) in Guitar Hero III. In the lawsuit, Rose claims that when he learned that a Slash-like character and other Velvet Revolver songs would be included in Guitar Hero II, he refused to allow Activision to use "Welcome to the Jungle" within Guitar Hero III, nor promotional images of Slash that had already been created. According to Rose's claims, Activision stated that these would only be used as promotional material for a trade show, but ended up using them within the game. Furthermore, Rose asserts that Activision had used "Sweet Child o' Mine", which was only licensed for use on Guitar Hero II, for promotional material within Guitar Hero III. The case was later dismissed.

7.1



JNP

Guitar Hero: Aerosmith

Developer	BudCat
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(eu) June 27, 2008
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

Guitar Hero: Aerosmith is considered an expansion in the Guitar Hero series, extending upon the general features of Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock.

A departure from other games in the franchise, Guitar Hero: Aerosmith follows the career of Aerosmith, by playing significant songs in their catalog in a 'rough chronological fashion'. The gameplay follows the band through various periods in its history, spanning from its first show at Mendon Nipmuc Regional High School in 1970 to the 2001 Super Bowl XXXV halftime show, to their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame on March 19, 2001. The player starts as Joe Perry, and will eventually be able to unlock Brad Whitford and Tom Hamilton. The game does not focus on the internal strife and stress within the band; Guitarist Joe Perry stated that the game would focus on the positive aspects of Aerosmith's history. Perry has stated that "Having a game built around Aerosmith has been a huge honor and really a great experience for us. We've put a lot of ideas into the game so that fans can have fun interacting with our music, getting inside our body of work and learning about the band's history."

The gameplay is based on the same gameplay elements from Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock. The game offers several gameplay modes. Career mode is broken into six tiers of five tracks, each based on a period in Aerosmith's history. Furthermore, within each tier, there are two Opening Acts, featuring non-Aerosmith songs, that must be completed before the Aerosmith songs can be played; the final song in each tier is an encore once the other four songs are completed. As the player completes this mode, they will also be presented with video clips talking about the band and other trivia about the band. The Career mode features one Boss Battle (against Joe Perry) as introduced in Guitar Hero III. Any unlocked song can be played in Quick Play mode, Co-operative mode, with one player on lead guitar and the other on bass, and Competitive mode, including the Battle modes. Unlike Guitar Hero III, there is no Co-Operative Career mode. One significant upgrade from Guitar Hero III is the addition of score balancing in Pro Face Off multiplayer mode, which allows each player to choose their own difficulty while still allowing each side to play the full note chart, instead of switching back and forth within regular Face Off.

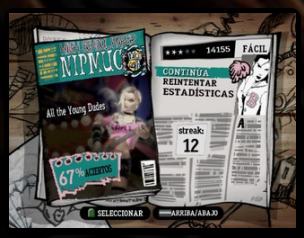
Guitar Hero: Aerosmith's soundtrack consists of 41 songs; thirty are playable during Career mode and another 11 songs are unlockable in the vault. Twenty-nine of the songs are from Aerosmith, while the other twelve songs are from bands that inspired or have played with Aerosmith in the past. Most of the songs are master recordings, including four Aerosmith songs that were re-recorded for this game. Four songs are covers—two performed by Wavegroup Sound and two by Steve Ouimette.

Billboard announced that the band Aerosmith was *"working closely with the makers of Guitar Hero*

World Tour, which will be dedicated to the group's music." Guitar Hero: World Tour was also confirmed as in development following the announcement of the merger between Activision and Vivendi Games in December 2007.

On February 15, 2008, Activision announced that one of their two new Guitar Hero installments would be Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, and would be released in June 2008. Guitar Hero: Aerosmith was developed by Neversoft for the PS3 and Xbox 360 versions, the Wii version of the game was being developed by Vicarious Visions, and the PS2 version was developed by Budcat Creations.

The idea for Guitar Hero: Aerosmith came about during the development of Guitar Hero III. Originally, a cover version of *"Same Old Song and Dance"* was present in the game, but Neversoft president Joel Jewett noted that the quality of the recording was poor. After getting in contact with Joe Perry, Perry was able to provide the original masters for the song, and, according to Neversoft developer Alan Flores, *"that sort of established the relationship."* This also came at a time where Activision was attempting to expand the Guitar Hero franchise, and fans expressed a strong interest in playing a game focused solely on Aerosmith's works, according to RedOctane's Dusty Welch. Another producer for the game, Aaron Habibipour, stated that Aerosmith was one of the five *"holy grail"* musical groups as polled by Activision. Newsweek reported that Aerosmith's license allows for exclusive use of their songs within the Guitar Hero series for a limited amount of time, preventing their use within other rhythm games such as Rock Band. This is not the first time Aerosmith has appeared in a video game. The band was previously featured in both Quest for Fame and Revolution X.



Similar to Slash, Tom Morello, and Bret Michaels in Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock, the entire Aerosmith band has participated in motion capture to accurately recreate their moves digitally for the game. Additional opening acts and special guest stars are also in the game including Run-D.M.C. (D.M.C. appears as a playable character), The Kinks, and Lenny Kravitz.

While Aerosmith was able to provide many of the original master recordings to the development team, the band re-recorded the four songs chosen for the game from their first album: "Make It", "Movin' Out", "Dream On" and "Mama Kin".[14] Joe Perry re-mastered the lead guitar on many songs to interact with the gameplay better, while Steven Tyler re-recorded some of the vocals.

The game itself is based much on Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock's mechanics with some improvements; notably, hammer-ons and pull-offs are *"less mushy"*, there are new venues for the game, and while all other gameplay modes from Guitar Hero III are present, there is no co-op career mode. The game's interfaces and menus were redesigned for the game. Additionally, the team re-evaluated the difficulty of the game based on feedback from players of Guitar Hero III who felt that there were *"too many brick walls for casual fans"*.

The developers attempted to recreate as many of historical venues within the game. For example, to fulfill Joe Perry's request that they recreate Max's Kansas City in New York, the developers used old photographs and YouTube videos of the club during the 1970s, to a highly accurate degree, as claimed by those that had attended the club during that period. Within these venues, set decorations are inspired from Aerosmith album covers. Five that were confirmed are Pump, Toys in the Attic, Just Push Play, Get Your Wings, and Nine

The members of Aerosmith participated in a special sneak preview event at the Hard Rock Cafe in New York City on June 27, 2008, allowing attendees to ask questions and try out the game. Target had Chip Ganassi's #40 car, driven by Dario Franchitti, painted to celebrate the release of Guitar Hero: Aerosmith for a NASCAR race on June 29, 2008.

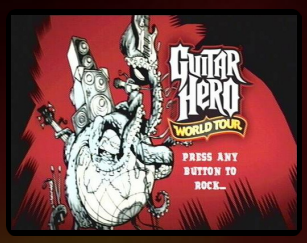
As with some of the previous installments in the series, Guitar Hero: Aerosmith is available as both a standalone disc and as part of a bundle. This bundle includes the Gibson Les Paul controller and a special red faceplate with the Aerosmith logo in white. The bundle also includes a tour book for the game listing the songs featured in the game. The special Aerosmith bundle was available for the PS3, Xbox 360, and Wii versions. The Playstation 2 bundle includes the Kramer Wireless controller included with Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock. There is also a very limited edition bundle for the PlayStation 2 at Wal-Mart. This bundle comes with the game and two wired Gibson SG guitar controllers as bundled with the original Guitar Hero and its sequel.

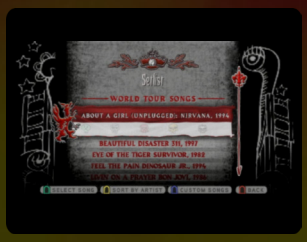
The game has received generally mixed reviews. Many reviews found the game avoided some of Aerosmith's *"more popular sugar-coated hits... like 'Amazing', 'Crazy', or 'I Don't Wanna Miss a Thing'"*, but felt that other major Aerosmith songs could have also been included. Game Informer noted that *"creating a band specific game was smart"*, but that *"very little has changed from the base game"*. They also complimented the great job that Activision did with their motion captures of Aerosmith. The difficulty of the game was not to be found as hard as Guitar Hero III due to the *"very riff-friendly guitarist"* Joe Perry; while reviewers felt this was a good correction from the previous game, they also noted that the easiness of Guitar Hero: Aerosmith led to some bland tiers, repetitive musical sections, and lack of any significant difficulty curve. The length of the game was poorly received, with reviewers commenting that it is difficult to justify the title priced equivalently as other next-generation console full games. Eurogamer commented that one's appreciation for the game *"lives or dies based on [the player's] fondness for Aerosmith"*, and that ultimately, with other available music games that offer additional downloadable songs, a game that focuses on a single band would need *"to offer gameplay innovations, spectacular fan service, or a lot more material"* than what Guitar Hero: Aerosmith provides. Reviews also noted the sparseness of downloadable content.

Guitar Hero: Aerosmith sold more than $50 million in sales in the first three months following its release, with over one million copies sold. The band itself saw a 40% increase in their catalog sales in the weeks following the game's release. According to Activision-Blizzard CEO Bobby Kotick, Guitar Hero: Aerosmith has made more money for the band than any sales of their previous albums.

Guitar Hero World Tour

8.5



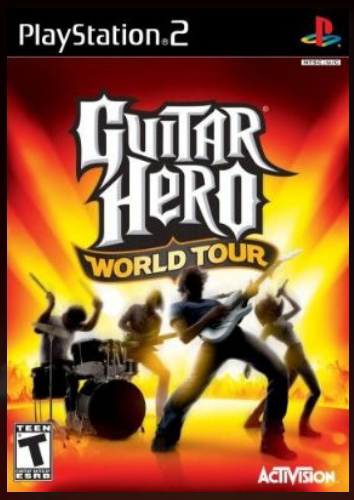


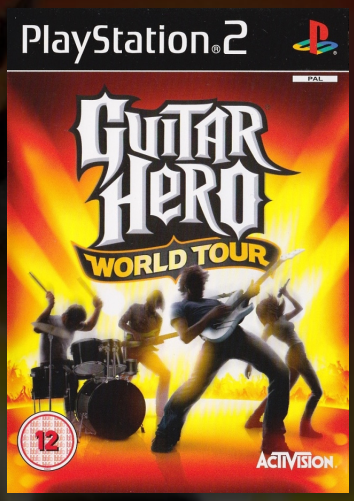
Developer	BudCat
Publisher	Activision Blizzard
Release date	(us) October 26, 2008
Genre	Music
Mode	1-4 Players

Guitar Hero World Tour (initially referred to as Guitar Hero IV or Guitar Hero IV: World Tour) is the fourth main entry in the Guitar Hero series, the sixth on home consoles and the seventh overall. The game was launched for the PS2, PS3, Wii, Xbox 360, Windows and Macintosh.

World Tour expands beyond the core guitar-based gameplay by introducing the ability to play drums and sing vocals, and supports the ability for up to four players to play together in a virtual band through these different instruments. Similar to Rock Band, the band shares a common score, scoring multiplier and band performance meter while each player has their own performance metric; the band also shares the same "Star Power" meter, though any player may activate it at any time. A player that performs poorly and reduces their performance meter to zero can still continue to play, but they drain the overall performance meter for the band, requiring the other players to make up for this. Successfully completing a song garners a three to five-star rating based on the accumulated score, and rewards such as in-game money that can be used to buy new guitars and outfits for characters.

The guitar interface remains relatively unchanged in World Tour. One addition to the guitar gameplay is the ability to play notes while holding a sustained note. Additionally, the bass guitar player is required to play notes representing an open E string, which is shown on-screen as a solid line across their note track. To play these notes, the bass guitar player strums the controller without pressing any fret button keys. The drum interface is similar to the guitar's interface, with each on-screen note track equivalent to a colored drum head on the controller, with the bass drum indicated by a line across the note track. The drum player only needs to hit the correct drum pads simultaneously to the note gems to successfully play their track. There are also marked sections indicating drum fills wherein the player may play any notes they wish in a 'solo' to gain points. The vocal track requires the player to match the pitch of the notes in a manner similar to Karaoke Revolution to be successful. Special sections of

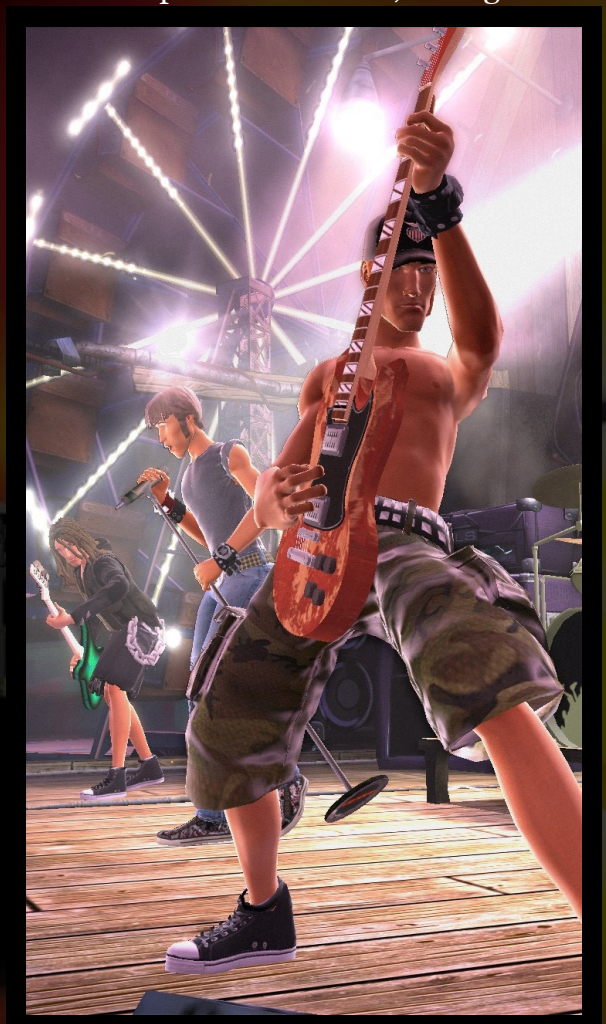




Guitar Kit (us)

Band Kit (us)

each player's note track are marked with glowing notes, which, if completed successfully, builds up Star Power. Once enough Star Power is accumulated, it can be released via various means to double the band's current score multiplier. For guitar and bass, this is done by lifting the guitar controller vertically or (though not in bass) by pressing a button on the guitar face; for drums, by striking both cymbal pads on the controller at the same time; for vocals, by tapping the microphone or making a similarly quick sound. Star Power's use has been modified over previous Guitar Hero entries in that Star Power can now be accumulated even when Star Power is in use by successfully completing additional Star Power phrases, which extends the Star Power's duration.



In addition to the standard four difficulty levels (Easy, Medium, Hard, and Expert) for each song and instrument, a new Beginner level has been added in World Tour. This difficulty is aimed for younger and unskilled players; notes are generally simple straight lines in time with bass drum beats, and allowing any or no fret button to be held while the note is strummed (for lead and bass guitar), any drum to be hit (for drums), or any sound to be made (for vocals).

Players are able to use the Create-a-Rocker mode which is based on the Create-a-Skater mode in Neversoft's Tony Hawk series and the advanced character creation scheme from the Tiger Woods PGA Tour series. Players can change their character's poise, clothing, tattoos, makeup, and age. Selected characters from previous Guitar Hero games are available as templates for creating a rocker. Previous games featured Gibson Guitars, but as a result of a lawsuit with Gibson Guitars, branded guitars are not featured; instead, the player can create a customized guitar from various components, such as bodies, fretboards, and headstocks. The player's in-game drum set and microphone can also be similarly customized. The 14 starting characters of the game can be customized too; however, their customization is limited to clothing and accessories only. Activision had formed partnerships with several instrument equipment manufactures to be featured in the game, including Ampeg, Audio-Technica, EMG Pickups, Ernie Ball, Evans Drumheads, Guitar Center, Krank Amplification, Mackie, Marshall, Orange County Drum & Percussion, Pork Pie Percussion, Regal Tip, Sabian, Vox and Zildjian.

In addition to the computer- and player-controlled characters, avatars of notable musicians are featured in the game, either with motion capture or the licensing of their image for their character. Such playable artists include Hayley Williams of Paramore, Jimi Hendrix, Ozzy Osbourne, Zakk Wylde, the Smashing Pumpkins' frontman Billy Corgan, Sting, Ted Nugent, and Travis Barker.

New venues in the game include virtual recreations of real arenas, such as Ozzfest, Amoeba Music, Live Nation's House of Blues, Sunset Strip and San Francisco's AT&T Park. One venue showcases the trademark art style of Tool and was developed in collaboration with the band. World Tour is the first Activision game on the PlayStation 3 to support dynamic in-game advertising provided by IGA Worldwide; similar advertising for the Xbox 360 version is provided by Massive Incorporated.

Instruments:

Guitar and bass guitar: RedOctane developed a new guitar controller for World Tour. The unit is approximately 25% larger than previous controllers, making it closer to the size of a real guitar. The new controller includes a longer

whammy bar and places the Star Power button directly below the strum bar, improving the access of these features. The strum bar itself was made quieter and longer. The neck of the guitar is detachable, similar to the Gibson Les Paul controller for Guitar Hero III, but the connector has been hardened to avoid connection issues experienced with the previous unit. The neck of the guitar features a touch-sensitive pad just toward the body end from the normal five fret buttons. The player can use either the fret buttons or the touch pad to play regular notes. The pad also allows the player to play notes via tapping or via "tap strumming" similar to the slap bass method for bass guitar, and to alter the pitch of sustained notes. Guitar tracks feature notes connected by a semi-transparent gems called "Slider Gems"; the player can play these notes by sliding their fingers up and down the touch pad or by tapping the fret buttons without strumming. The touchpad can also be used for sustained and staccato notes in the music studio feature while recording guitar, and is used for finer control over loops when recording other instruments.

Drums: World Tour features a wireless six-piece drum kit, with a bass drum pedal and five velocity-sensitive drum pads, which Activision has stated provide the *"most realistic drum experience ever in a video game"*. Generally, the pads represent the snare drum (red), the tom-tom drum (blue), the floor tom (green), the hi-hat cymbal (yellow), and the crash cymbal (orange), however, they can be used for other percussion instruments depending on the song. The bass drum is represented by a purple, horizontal line on the highway, which players must use the drum pedal to hit. The drum kit was designed with help from John Devacka, the developer of MTV Drumscape, and developed key patents used for most modern music games that are now owned by Activision. Special note gems on the drum track, representing accent notes, are "armored", requiring the player to strike the corresponding drum head harder in order to break the armor and score more points. During song creation, the velocity sensitivity feature of the drum pad allows players to alter the sounds made by the drums. The drum set also has a MIDI input port in the back, allowing users to connect a compatible MIDI drum kit to play in the game.

Microphone: The official microphone used for vocals uses a USB connection. When playing vocals, a standard game controller is necessary in order to navigate menus, select difficulties and pause. The microphone can also be used as a standard recording device when connected to

a casual PC USB port. The computer recognizes the device as a Logitech Recording Device.

Logitech and Activision announced that the former company would produce "premium" instruments to be released later in 2008.

World Tour works with older Guitar Hero guitar controllers. All Rock Band original Harmonix instruments for PS2 work with World Tour. Xbox 360 and PS3 instruments also work on the PS2 versions of World Tour, as well as later Guitar Hero games.

Console makers have helped to ensure instrument compatibility between current and upcoming guitar and band games.

World Tour adjusts the tracks in the game to account for the instrument controller being used. For example, sections of the lead guitar track that are designed to be played on the new World Tour controller's touchpad can be played by tapping the frets on older controllers without strumming. When using Rock Band's drum controller, which has one fewer percussion pad than the World Tour unit and lacks velocity sensitivity, two of the lanes on the "World Tour" drum board merge, reducing the note track to four drum pads and bass pedal, and no armored notes are presented.

All of the 86 songs in the game are master recordings, a first for the series. Project director Brian Bright claims that they have *"a pretty even split between the '80s, '90s, and classic rock"* with a *"good amount of emerging bands"*.

Guitar Hero World Tour allows players to create their own songs through the "Music Studio". The player can create the tracks for each song by playing it in real or slowed time, with the game quantizing offbeat notes to the nearest beat as set by the player, or tracks can be constructed one note at a time. The notes played by the user are the default "Expert" difficulty track, and the lower difficulty versions are generated by the game.

Players can create the tracks for lead, rhythm, and bass guitars and for drums, selecting from a number of different sounds and kits for each instrument. Distortion and other effects can be added to these tracks through Line 6 amplifiers in the "GHMix" mode. Players cannot record vocals directly, but can create a hum-along vocal line in the Studio.

The PS2 version of the game features custom song creation, but does not support the uploading service as with the other console versions of the game.

The fourth major entry to the Guitar Hero series, at the time named Guitar Hero IV, was officially announced upon the merger of Activision and Vivendi Games in December 2007. *"We couldn't have done it without Red Octane's support."* says the Guitar Hero Team. The game's new name, Guitar Hero World Tour, was officially announced by Activision in May 2008.

Activision and RedOctane had previously registered for trademarks on "Guitar Villain", "Drum Villain", "Keyboard Hero", "Drum Hero" and "Band Hero". Analysts speculated that future Guitar Hero would need to include additional instrument peripherals in order to compete against former Guitar Hero developer Harmonix's Rock Band. Activision's CEO Bobby Kotick and early previews of the game revealed that Guitar Hero IV would branch out into other instruments and vocals.

According to the Game Informer preview, the addition of drum functionality came from work initially done towards the Drum Hero title. This work was later folded into the Guitar Hero series after Neversoft was chosen as developer of the series. Neversoft's Allen Flores stated that with the addition of the existing drum gameplay, the development of World Tour took under

a year, starting development immediately after the release of Guitar Hero III. The drum instrument controller was designed to be more realistic, with input from Chad Smith (of Red Hot Chili Peppers), Stewart Copeland (of The Police) and Travis Barker (of Blink-182), all of whom requested the elevated cymbal pads. The ability to open-strum the guitar was a feature that was planned for Guitar Hero III but was removed before release, finding that it was too difficult on the guitar tracks. However, they built this feature in from the start of World Tour development for the bass guitar tracks.

Bright describes the development of the note track for a given song once it has been licensed for the game as a parallel effort, a process that they have found to be more efficient than their previous work on the Tony Hawk games. Once the song was mixed for use by the development team, a "tempo map" was created by one developer; this map denotes the beats in the music which then can be used by the rest of the development team. Once the tempo map was complete, the song was then distributed to the various teams, such as the specific instrument teams or to the animators, to complete the song. Note-for-note tracking from the song was then performed, and in some cases, changes were made to account for sections that cannot be replicated on the game controllers; the final track represented the note track for the Expert difficulty of the song. Note tracks were then reduced and adjusted to create the note tracks for the lower difficulties in the game. A difficulty assessment was made using the final note tracks to determine where the songs were to be placed in the soundtrack progression. The difficulty model is based on that from Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, which was adjusted from the Guitar Hero III model after the team received negative feedback from players regarding a "brick wall" in the difficulty progression in that game.

The song list for World Tour started as the list of songs that Neversoft wanted to include in Guitar Hero III, but had failed to get into the game or as downloadable content; the list was eventually expanded to over 500 songs. The song list was then prioritized based on what the team thought would be best in the game, and then going after the music that would take the longest time to license, as was the case for the Jimi Hendrix songs. While songs were selected to make sure that guitar, bass, and drums all had great parts, they also opted for songs that would be strong for one single instrument as to make the game still appealing for those playing the single player modes. Some songs were also suggested through the licensing efforts by Activision for inclusion in the game. Flores stated that the inclusion of caricatures of recording artists in the game was either due to the team seeking that specific artist for the game, or the artist approaching the development team and requesting to be part of it. The band Tool, which hasn't licensed its music since 1996, allowed for the inclusion of three of its songs in World Tour as long they were involved with the artwork and tracking of the songs for the game, leading to the creation of the art-like Tool venue.

Bright noted that they had support for *"epic drum solos"*, in which the band animation would focus on the drummer, but removed this feature from the game's final release due to its complexity. They also had to remove the "Jam Over" mode planned for the game's music creation section that would have allowed players to start with one of the game's songs and play over it on their instruments; this feature was removed in order to keep the final product polished and on-time.

The custom song creation feature was inspired by the current "hacking environment" that has arisen from the first two Guitar Hero games, where players would create new tracks and share them with others.

World Tour is available in several bundle packages, as well as the stand-alone game. In addition to a game bundle that includes a wireless guitar for each platform, the game could be bought in one of two bundles that include the guitar, drums, and microphone controller. The second bundle, only available through RedOc-

tane's store, also includes a T-shirt, keychain, and a recharging kit. Players in the United Kingdom who pre-order the full band bundle also received a second guitar controller for bass players. The bass guitar is the Les Paul guitar, the same model as bundled with Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock. During the Christmas season of 2008, Some retailers, such as Target, sold in-store a dual guitar bundle which included two identical wireless Les Paul styled guitars from previous game versions and did not include the new guitar with the tapping area.

Activision created a series of television advertisements directed by Brett Ratner based on the famous scene from Risky Business where Tom Cruise dances to Bob Seger's "Old Time Rock and Roll" in a shirt and underwear, each featuring a different set of celebrities lip synching to the lyrics while using the new instrument controllers. The first ad included athletes Kobe Bryant, Tony Hawk, Alex Rodriguez, and Michael Phelps. Another ad spot featured model Heidi Klum; two versions of Klum's ad exist, one a "director's cut" where she is wearing less clothing. A subsequent commercial featuring model Marisa Miller was banned from airing as too racy.

A YouTube viral video entitled "Bike Hero" showed what appeared to be a teenager riding a bike along a route marked with symbols similar in appearance to the in-game note tracks with LED lights on the handlebars blinking in time to the notes to the song "Prisoner of Society" by The Living End. The video was later determined to be the work of a viral marketing company Droga5 in cooperation with Activision to promote the Guitar Hero games. The viral advertisement was considered a success, with about 3.5 million views since its release.

Guitar Hero World Tour has received generally positive reviews from critics, many making comparisons between it and the Rock Band series. 1UP noted that while World Tour is not as good a *"party game"* as Rock Band, the game still provides *"great peripherals and fun-to-play music"* and delivers what the player should expect. GameTrailers stated that *"another viable challenger has stepped onto the stage."* IGN's review was lukewarm, noting that *"A number of things it tries to accomplish were already done better in Rock Band"*, but stated that the game would be a good *"stepping point"* for the next iteration of the series.

While reviewers were satisfied with the single player modes of the game, the Band tour mode was considered weaker than Rock Band's Tour mode. The interface for a full band, despite being similar to Rock Band, was found to be confusing, making it difficult to determine if a fellow bandmember was about to fail or identifying how much Star Power the band had accumulated. The Band tour was found to be little different from the single player modes, and lacked the additional incentives and challenges that Rock Band had. The note charts and the game's difficulty curve were found to be significantly easier than the more punishing ones in Guitar Hero III. Critics did observe poor note charting, stating that some of the song charts *"simply don't match the music"* and that *"you'll be asked to hit notes where there are none, or not hit notes that are there."* The soundtrack was generally praised for containing all master recordings. However, critics found that the setlist contains very few standout hits, and that the inclusion of a number of foreign-language and difficult-to-recognize songs weakened the overall list. Reviews also commented on the number of songs that overlapped with Rock Band 2's set list.

Reviews of the instrument peripherals for World Tour were mixed. The new touchpad on the guitar controller was found to be imprecise to make it difficult to use during difficult song sections and would sometimes fail to register taps or slides; some of these issues were attributed to initial manufacturing problems. The drum kit has been praised for ease of set up, the drum pad layout, and the response of the drums, though the lack of a means to fix the location of bass drum pedal was seen as a drawback when compared to the Rock Band drum kit.

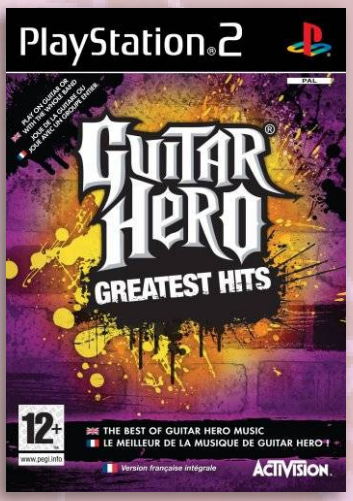
The music creation feature of the game, while seen as a useful addition to the game, was found to be difficult to use, suffered from on-screen lag that could interfere with song creation, and the quality of the resulting songs were compared to ring tones for cell phones. The character customization in World Tour was generally seen as an improvement over the limitations of Rock Band. However, reviewers noted that the use of the real-life celebrities against the cartoon-like visuals, along with the emphasis on the band and not individual players, made their presence *"anachronistic"*.

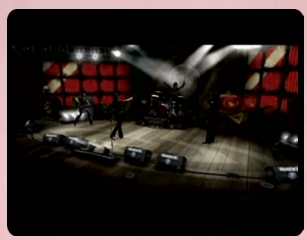
World Tour sold more than 534,000 units during its first week of release, less than half of the sales of Guitar Hero III during the same period, with the Wii version selling the most with 183,000 units. The PS2 version was the 17th best-selling game and best-selling PS2 game of the same month in that region. World Tour sold 3.4 million copies across all platforms in North America during 2008. Full band bundles represented 41% of all unit sales of World Tour through January 2009, equating to 61% of the game's revenue, while 35% of unit sales and 27% of total revenues came from the guitar and game bundle. In a March 2011 list, the NPG Group placed World Tour as the 7th highest grossing game in the United States since 1995.

Users encountered several technical issues with the instrument controllers upon release of the game. Most often cited was the drum controller failing to register drum hits by the player. Users have also noted that the wireless guitar strum bar may fail after a few hours of playing. Activision has acknowledged that drum sets from earlier manufacturing processes may be prone to these errors, and have set up several support threads on their Guitar Hero forums to address the issue and assist users in equipment replacement.

Guitar Hero Smash Hits

6.9





Developer	Beenox
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) June 16, 2009
Genre	Music
Mode	1-4 Players

Guitar Hero Smash Hits, titled Guitar Hero Greatest Hits in Europe and Australia, is the fourth expansion game to the Guitar Hero series. The game reuses many elements from previous titles in the series, including Guitar Hero World Tour and Guitar Hero: Metallica.

Smash Hits plays similar to Guitar Hero World Tour, featuring support for a four-instrument band: lead guitar, bass guitar, drums, and vocal. In addition to using master recordings for each song, the songs have been charted to use gameplay features introduced in World Tour including the open bass strumming & slider sections for intense solos using the touchpad on the guitar bundled with World Tour. Certain songs have been recharted or remixed to be more accessible to the full band; for example, "I Love Rock N Roll" includes a drum and vocals solo without guitar portions that were omitted in the original Guitar Hero, while the piano introduction in "Killer Queen" is tapped out by the lead guitar player. The game borrows gameplay and graphical elements from Guitar Hero: Metallica, including the "Expert+" difficulty level using two bass drum pedals and the rearrangement of on-screen meters for band mode. Smash Hits includes a Music Studio creation mode and is compatible with the "GHTunes" custom song sharing service present in World Tour and Metallica. Smash Hits also includes all the game modes present in World Tour, including single player and band career modes, and the eight-player "Battle of the Band" mode.

The game presents a story sequence that ties in with the Career mode, as has been present in more recent Guitar Hero games. In Smash Hits, the players are challenged by the "God of Rock" to play at venues at various Wonders of the World in order to charge a power artifact; it is revealed later that the God of Rock is actually Lou the Devil in disguise seeking the power of the artifact, the real God trapped by Lou. The player's band is able to discover Lou's deception and free the God of Rock; the band then rejects the God of Rock's offer of ascension to immortality, instead wanting to return to Earth to continue to rock. After completing each venue, the players earn venue-specific clothing to customize their avatars. The career mode follows the same star-tier system used in Metallica, requiring players to earn a fixed number of stars to proceed from one tier to the next. As with Guitar Hero: Metallica, all songs are available to play in Quickplay mode without unlocking them through the career mode.

All 48 tracks in the game are master recordings of songs previously featured in the first five published games of the Guitar Hero series. "Freya" and "Cult of Personality" are re-recordings performed by The Sword and Living Colour, respectively, while two other songs are taken from live concert recordings; all other songs are based on original studio recordings. The game supports user-created songs through the "GHTunes" service (common to Guitar Hero World Tour and Guitar Hero: Metallica).

Songs in either the Career single player or band mode are arranged in tiers roughly in order of difficulty for the particular instrument, with different orders for each of the five Career paths. However, all songs are playable from the game's "Quickplay" mode without completing any Career goals.

Guitar Hero: Smash Hits was one of three new titles for the Guitar Hero series announced in early 2009. Though the game was initially called Guitar Hero: Greatest Hits, cover art for the game in North America had shown the title had changed to Guitar Hero: Smash Hits.

Paul Gadbois, developer at Beenox Studios, identified that their goal for the game was to focus on the music from the past games in the Guitar Hero series, and that the selection of the soundtrack was one of the core features they focused on first. Songs were selected based on several factors, including songs that were not formerly available to Wii and PS3 owners, and songs that played well in both single player and band modes. They also thought of playing the "greatest songs" in the "greatest places", and developed eight new venues based on Wonders of the World, including "Amazon Rain Forest", "The Polar Ice Caps" and "The Grand Canyon". The team opted to reuse the original Guitar Hero characters instead of attempting to bring in musical celebrities as was done in Guitar Hero World Tour and Guitar Hero: Metallica, fearing that the star power would have outshone the music selection. Beenox performed all of the major development efforts, including designing the venues, selecting the songs, and creating the note tracks, though Neversoft provided their own development tools and provided Beenox with their own insight from developing the other Guitar Hero games in the series. While the Beenox developers were provided with the note charts from the songs in their original games, they only looked at these after developing new charts for the songs on their own, and modified their new charts to accommodate sections from the originals that made them fun to play in the first place. The game's full setlist was revealed over the course of April and May 2009 by allowing users to vote on the order of the remastered tracks from the four previous games.

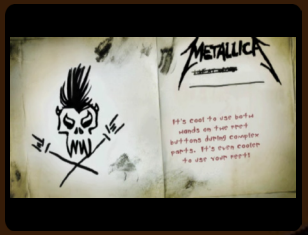
In North America, various retailers provided pre-order incentives for those who reserved Smash Hits. GameStop and EB Games gave away a pair of branded drumsticks with the game. Best Buy provided a discount towards any Guitar Hero World Tour-related product with pre-orders of the game, and provided a limited supply of extra drum bass pedals for the "Expert+" mode with purchase of the game. Game Crazy offered exclusive cheat codes as their incentive.

Guitar Hero: Smash Hits received moderate praise from reviews, many of which cited that the game itself demonstrates the over-saturation of the music game market and the sheer number of titles with the Guitar Hero series that Activision has marketed. Chris Roper of IGN summarized that the game *"is the definition of 'milking'"*, noting that, save for the PS2 version, all of the songs in the game could have been distributed as downloadable content or reused within other compatible titles. Jeff Gerstmann of Giant Bomb commented that *"something about the game's full [...] price tag doesn't quite feel right"* and reaffirmed that being able to select a handful of the songs to play again would have been a preferred method of distribution. Tom Bramwell of Eurogamer further suggested that a simultaneous release of both the retail product and the same songs as downloadable content would have been an improvement.

Guitar Hero: Metallica

8.2

Guitar Bundle (au)



Developer	Neversoft Entertainment
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) April 14, 2009
Genre	Music
Mode	1-4 Players

Guitar Hero: Metallica was released on the PS2, ps3, Wii, and Xbox 360. Guitar Hero: Metallica is the second game of the Guitar Hero series to focus on the career and songs of one band following Guitar Hero: Aerosmith. The game is based on Guitar Hero World Tour, with support for lead and bass guitar, drums, and vocals.

Guitar Hero: Metallica, like other games in the Guitar Hero series, allows players to simulate the playing of rock music using special instrument controllers. The game is based on the band approach presented in Guitar Hero World Tour, and features parts of lead and bass guitar, drums, and vocals.

Lead developer Alan Flores has stated that the difficulty of the game is much harder than previous games and is designed to challenge the hard-core player. To meet the *"ferocity"* of Metallica's songs, the game features, in addition to the same five difficulty levels in World Tour, an "Expert+" mode for drummers that allows them to add a second bass drum pedal, though results of this mode is not tracked through online modes. Additional drum pedals and a splitter, to allow two pedals to be used, were made available upon the game's release and as part of pre-ordering bonuses. While the game allows two guitar players to play lead and bass guitar, it does not give the players the option to play lead and rhythm guitar, which does not allow for notable "Hetfield/Hammett riff-trading" on certain songs. Lead designer Alan Flores explained that the decision not to track the lead and rhythm (in addition to the single player guitar, bass, drums, and vocals) *"was simply a workload issue."*

Similar to Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, Metallica presents songs from Metallica's history roughly in chronological order, but it focuses more on the group today than the band's history. The songs in the game are presented in a linear series of sets as with older Guitar Hero games such as Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock, instead of the gig progression used in World Tour. However, instead of being required to finish a certain number of songs in each set, the player has to earn a total number of stars (earned from their performance on the individual songs) in a given set to progress to next one. The game's story is based on a band that wants to follow in Metallica's footsteps, and the group accepting them as leading acts for them on a tour; as such, they are better able to order the songs in difficulty comparable to other Guitar Hero games, as Metallica's earlier works frustrate the player enough to *"throw the controller against the wall and stop playing"*. Flores described the difficulty for most of the game to be comparable to Guitar Hero: Aerosmith and World Tour after the complaints of the difficulty level in Guitar Hero III, but further noted that the most difficult songs in the games will be very challenging. Real-life venues are used for the game, including The Stone nightclub in San Francisco, the Hammersmith Odeon in London, Tushino Airfield in Moscow, and The Forum in Los Angeles, and one final venue representing the

pinnacle of Metallica's success. The game was completed before Metallica's induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and thus does not include reference to this event. The game's interface remain similar to World Tour with some Metallica-based artwork added to it. Two changes have been made from World Tour; individual performance and Star Power meters are now located next to each track on screen instead of grouped together to make it easier to keep track of one's own performance, and when the band's performance is failing, the edges of the screen glow red to indicate this.

The music creation mode from World Tour is available, giving the player the option of using tones from Hetfields' ESP Truckster guitar and Slayer's Tom Araya's ESP Bass in addition to Metallica drum sounds. The "GHTunes" services, which allows players to share songs created in the music creation mode, is cross-compatible with both World Tour and Metallica. In the new "Drum Over" mode for this game, players can select any song, and play drums without any fixed drum track or without any failure, allowing them to create their own drum line using the song's existing drum kit sounds.

The Battle mode of the game, based on that from Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock, has been slightly altered to add Metallica influences; for example, a power-up named "Fade to Black" completely blackens the note tracks for the opposing player, "Trapped Under Ice", which freezes the whammy bar, and an electrical attack called "Ride the Lightning" (based on the "Amp Overload" attack from Guitar Hero III) is added.

Guitar Hero: Metallica features 49 songs based on master recordings, 28 by Metallica, and the other 21 songs by bands that are *"their personal favorites and influences from over the years"*, including those that appeared on their Garage Inc. album. All of the Metallica songs in the game are from original masters, though locating some masters proved troublesome. Though Metallica were prepared to re-record songs as Aerosmith had done for Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, they were able to find the masters for their debut album Kill 'Em All in the basement of their former manager Johny Zazula. The PlayStation 2 and Wii versions of the game include "Broken, Beat & Scarred", "Cyanide" and "My Apocalypse" from Death Magnetic in addition to the game's existing tracks. The 1998 medley of covers of the band Mercyful Fate's songs "Mercyful Fate" is the longest track included in the game, running at around 11 minutes.

Metallica selected songs from their catalog that *"pretty evenly represent all the different phases"* of the band. Lars Ulrich noted that the band stood up for the inclusion of the band Slayer against Microsoft's concerns on the explicit lyrical content of the group's songs. Alan Flores, lead designer for the game, noted that they had originally cleared Slayer's "Angel of Death" but had to pull it at a late date due to pressure on the song's background, instead, at the urging of Ulrich, successfully cleared "War Ensemble" and rushed to include it in the game. Ulrich also sought Mercyful Fate's "Evil" and "Curse of the Pharaohs" directly by King Diamond, but the latter was unable to find the masters; instead, King Diamond was able to bring the band together, though with Bjarne T. Holm replacing Kim Ruzz on drums, to record new masters for both songs. "Evil" was ultimately used over "Curse of the Pharaohs" due to gameplay-friendliness. Kirk Hammett stated that the band wanted to have songs from UFO and The Misfits, but could not get these groups due to legal reasons, and instead settled on songs from Michael Schenker Group and Samhain, bands

that were started by former members of those respective bands.

Guitar Hero: Metallica was revealed to be in production when an analyst for Wedbush Morgan Securities discovered mention of the game in Activision's 2008 SEC filings, slated to be released in "fiscal 2009". The band was approached in April 2008, who quickly agreed to the game as a *"no brainer"*. Development for the game began in the second quarter of 2008, according to lead designer Alan Flores. Two posts made to Metallica's website in June 2008 also referred to the *"not so top secret GH thing"*, and that Guitar Hero players could expect *"a pile of 'Tallica songs."* Lars Ulrich, when asked about the game during an interview with MTV, stated that *"the people at 'Guitar Hero' and Activision are rapidly becoming our best new friends in the world. You can put the rest of it together yourself."* Ulrich stated that the idea for the Metallica-themed Guitar Hero game came from the influence the original Guitar Hero games had on Ulrich and James Hetfield's children, learning about music and older bands such as Deep Purple and Black Sabbath.

The game was officially announced at the 2008 E3 conference during Microsoft's presentation, along with the announcement that Metallica's newest album, Death Magnetic, would be made as content for download for both Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock and Guitar Hero World Tour. A trailer for the game is included as an extra feature in Guitar Hero World Tour with "Master of Puppets" playing in the background and "Ride the Lightning" as the tagline.

As with Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, members of Metallica, including Kirk Hammett, Lars Ulrich, James Hetfield and Robert Trujillo performed six songs and band and audience chatter for motion capture for their in-game avatars; the detailed motion capture included the band's lip syncing to the lyrics and the motion of Trujillo's hair braids. Ulrich and Hetfield performed additional motion capturing sessions to help the developers. Metallica members appear as their modern day incarnations, but unlockable skins are available to reflect the band's history. Former band members Jason Newsted and the late Cliff Burton are not represented in the game as the band felt their inclusion would slight Trujillo. However, the game still includes trivia about both former members. The game includes DVD-style content such as photos, videos, and behind-the-scenes footage, as well as "Metallifacts", Pop-up Video-style trivia displayed on screen during the various Metallica tracks. Some Metallica songs in the game have an accompanying video of the band performing the song, with the quality ranging from fan-made videos at small clubs to large-scale video productions. Both Motörhead vocalist/bassist Lemmy and Mercyful Fate singer King Diamond have contributed to the game in both providing motion capture for unlockable player characters and providing re-recorded tracks of their songs "Ace of Spades" and "Evil", respectively due to the original master tapes not being located for use in the game's production. King Diamond's notable face makeup and jewellery was altered with direct input from King Diamond to avoid offending the religion of any of the business partners involved with the game.

During the game's development, the team encountered problems trying to create the drum tracks. Flores noted they normally try to map a note for every drum beat but could not easily replicate it for the double bass often used in Metallica's songs. As a result, they decided to create a splitter for the bass drum pedal and offer a second pedal with the game to allow the double bass kicks to be retained. The game's career mode, in which the players are part of an

opening band for Metallica, is based on a real-life group that followed Metallica during a European tour, eventually becoming enamored by the band and performing in an opening act with them.

A European-exclusive bundle includes the game, wireless guitar controller, and Metallica faceplate.

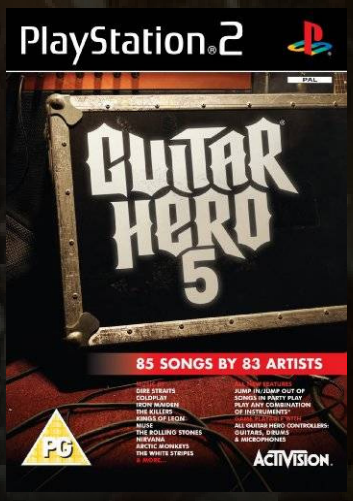
Players that pre-ordered Guitar Hero: Metallica through GameStop stores received a second kickpedal with pre-orders. Other stores offered Guitar Hero: Metallica-branded drumsticks with pre-orders.

Metallica made an appearance at the 2009 SXSW Music Festival held a week before the game's release for a *"not-so-secret"* performance, with demonstration stations set up to allow attendees to play the game. The game was the primary sponsor for Aric Almirola's Number 8 car in the 2009 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Goody's Fast Relief 500 run during the weekend of the game's release. Two television commercials, in the same style as those for Guitar Hero World Tour that parody the scene from Risky Business where Tom Cruise dances in his underwear during Bob Seger's song "Old Time Rock and Roll", were prepared for the game and were directed by Brett Ratner. The ads, which first aired during the 2009 NCAA Basketball Tournament, features NCAA coaches Bob Knight, Mike Krzyzewski, Roy Williams, and Rick Pitino along with the current members of Metallica.

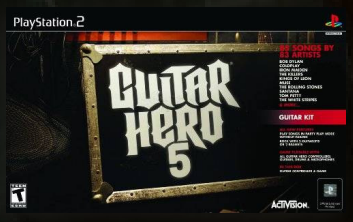
Guitar Hero: Metallica has received favorable reviews from game critics, and has been described as the best Guitar Hero game in the series since Neversoft took over development of the franchise. Simon Parkin of Eurogamer stated that Guitar Hero: Metallica "sets the benchmark" for future band-specific games from either Guitar Hero or Rock Band.

Reviews have primarily praised the game for a *"stellar"* set list that *"[reads] like the quintessential 'Best Of' track list for the band"*, and consider *"the best hit to miss ratio of any music game to date"*. The difficulty of the songs was also warmly received, with reviews noting that Metallica's songs can *"[translate] really well to a plastic guitar"*, and that *"the songs here are a treat on any skill level"*. However, the game still provides a difficult challenge for experienced players, and the introduction of the Expert+ difficulty for drums and the Drum Over mode were seen as good additions.

7.1



Guitar Bundle (us)



Guitar Hero 5

Developer	BudCat
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) September 1, 2009
Genre	Music
Mode	1-4 Players

Guitar Hero 5 (initially referred to as Guitar Hero V) is the fifth main entry in the series and the twelfth overall (ninth on home consoles). The game was released for the PS2, PS3, Wii and Xbox 360.

Gameplay in Guitar Hero 5 is similar to previous games in the series. As with Guitar Hero World Tour, Guitar Hero 5 supports the playing of lead and bass guitar through guitar controllers, drums through a drum controller, and vocals through a microphone. Players can also play in groups of up to four local or remote players to form a band, co-operatively playing through a song. Whereas in World Tour, a band could only have one of each instrument, Guitar Hero 5 allows players to arrange for any combination of instruments, including all four players on the same instrument if they so choose. While playing in a band, Star Power is now tracked separately for each player, as opposed to collectively for the band as in World Tour. A newlay mechanic called "Band Moments" will require all members of the band to play sections of a song successfully to gain rewards, both in a temporary scoring multiplier and visual effects on screen. The Band Revival meter will appear when a player fails out of the song, requiring the other band members to play well as a group together in order to bring the failed player back into the game. Failing to do so will end the song prematurely.

Guitar Hero 5 allows players to start in a Band Lobby from where they can then launch into any of the game's modes, add other local and remote players to a party, and switch between the game modes without having to leave the party or lobby, a significant change in response to the difficulties players found in World Tour. The game supports a Career mode, a Quickplay mode, where players can create a set list of numerous songs and play through them. All songs on are immediately available to play in this mode. The game also carries over the competitive modes from previous Guitar Hero games.

Two new multiplayer modes are in the game. The first is a "Party Play" mode, which is immediately launched once the game is started. During "Party Play", the game will automatically play randomly through the available songs. At any time, players can jump in with any instrument and start playing that song after selecting their difficulty and handedness; additional players can also jump in, drop out, or change their difficulty levels once someone is playing in this mode. The second feature is a "RockFest" mode, which can be played by four players locally, with several submodes that influence how the game is played and scored. In general, each song is divided into roughly 30-second long sections, and players earn points for their performance over that section based on the specific mode. These points are shown to all players to know how they are faring against the others. Players are able to create a playlist in Rockfest and assign a different mode to each song. The RockFest submodes include:

"Momentum": Starting at Medium difficulty, players can increase their

difficulty and score more points by hitting twenty consecutive notes, but will fall back in difficulty if they miss three notes in a row.

"Streakers": Points are awarded for making "streaks" a series of consecutive notes, with the value further increasing for longer streaks.

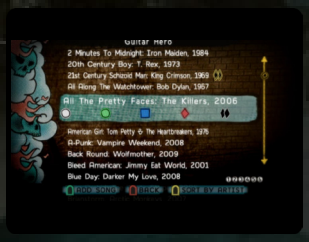
"Perfectionist": For each section of a song, players are ranked by the percentage of correct notes hit, with the top player getting the most points.

"Do or Die": A player is forced to wait out until the next section if they miss three notes in the current section of the song.

"Elimination": After each section of a song, the lowest scoring player is eliminated. However, if the scoring player decided to stay in, they may do so.

"Pro Face-Off": A standard score attack mode, with the highest score winning points.

Guitar Hero 5 features a combined single- and multi-player Career mode similar to Guitar Hero: Metallica. Songs in the game are distributed across 13 venues, with all but the first locked at the start. Each venue contains 5 or more specific songs and 1 or more special sponsored gigs, each with Challenges that can be completed along with playing through the song. To unlock the other venues, the players must collect a number of stars based on their performance playing individual songs, with each song offering up to 9 stars: up to 5 for the general scoring performance, an additional star for a perfect performance, and up to 3 for completing the song's Challenge. Players share the benefits of earning stars for their own respective profiles, thus, a player that may have difficulty completing one song on their own could join with a band that is able to complete it, benefiting from the gain in stars should they then play by themselves or with another group.



The game introduces Career mode Challenges, that are either tied to specific songs, or allow players to select a song to meet the Challenge requirement in "open gigs". These were created by Neversoft to allow the developers to take advantage of unique features of many of songs and provide another layer of gameplay, according to Neversoft's Brian Bright. Each Challenge features three possible completion levels—Gold, Platinum, and Diamond, mimicking the music recording sales certification levels—with Diamond being the most difficult to complete. The song-specific challenges include both instrument-specific challenges, such as correctly vocalizing the repeated "Fame" lyric at the end of David Bowie's "Fame" as it moves down in pitch, and more general scoring or performance challenges on either specific instruments or for the whole band. Open gig Challenges are presented by sponsors within the game, and are based on performance aspects such as scoring a certain amount of points using Star Power or using the guitar controller's whammy bar continuously for a length of time. These allow the player to select any song to complete, with some songs potentially being better suited for completing that challenge. The progress towards these Challenges is shown in-game by a record meter that appears when the challenge is active, and fills up similarly to the overall scoring meter as the player successfully completes towards the challenge. Higher completion levels, particularly Diamond, may only be possible by playing the Expert difficulty of a song, but players can take advantage of the mid-song difficulty adjustment feature to complete these if needed.

All players are awarded for completing a challenge if one of the members is able to do so, and will be reflected in the individual players' career progress. in addition, players

can unlock new avatars, outfits, and other content by completing challenges. The rewards of the challenges are used to replace the previous in-game money reward in previous Guitar Hero games.

However, the PS2 version does not include this challenge feature. Rather than doing the challenges to unlock avatars/content, all one must do is complete the gig by successfully completing all songs. Not all gigs have content to unlock, rather just those to which a particular unlockable applies (for example the Johnny Cash gig allows Johnny Cash to be unlocked as a playable avatar). The PS2 version does not support the Music Studio feature.

Avatars of famous musicians are part of the game, performing for songs by that artist and available as unlockable characters. Notably, Kurt Cobain of Nirvana is a playable avatar; Activision had sought to gain permission to use Cobain's image for the game for three years, including obtaining the necessary agreements with Courtney Love, who controls Cobain's estate, and Dave Grohl and Universal Publishing, who control Nirvana's catalog. Cobain's avatar was designed with input from Love, who provided photos and videos for the design team to use, and emphasized how she would like Cobain to appear, starting from his appearance in "Smells Like Teen Spirit" and modifying it from there. The avatar includes the T-shirt design based on Daniel Johnston's "Frog" that Cobain had popularized. Johnny Cash is also a playable character, with tribute artist Terry Lee Goffee helping to provide motion capture for his character. Carlos Santana, Shirley Manson (of Garbage), and Matthew Bellamy (of Muse) are also playable avatars, all of whom performed motion capture for their own avatars. There are also unlockable fictional characters like Skeleton, Golden God, Shadow, Frankenrocker, and Gerald Contest Winner. Though Activision approached Jon Bon Jovi to appear in the game, Bon Jovi turned down the offer. Nine of the characters from previous installments return in this game. They all have a costume that they start with and 3 more can be unlocked by completing challenges. Doing this will unlock also new pieces of clothing for the costume to use for user generated rockers. Also, while Gibson no longer sponsors the game, other guitar manufacturers, like Ibanez, ESP, Paul Reed Smith and Schecter, lent the likenesses of their instruments, allowing for new combinations on assembling custom guitars and basses. For the first time, also, sponsored clothing pieces can be used in customization (these being shoes from Vans, Dr. Martens and Converse) There is no money in the game leaving everything available to use, including unlockables. Instruments can also be unlocked to use. Also some clothing now can be changed in style. There are four styles for each; the one shown, two others that were separate items in previous games (with exceptions), and one new one (with exceptions). Pregenerated characters outfits can only be changed and users can only decide which outfit they wear. However they can still edit their instruments. Virtual avatars of the real life rockers can also not be changed in any way, including instruments.

The PS2 version of the game,

developed by Budcat Creations, features less functionality in comparison to other versions. Besides lacking online play or downloadable content, the game does not include drop-in/drop-out play, multiplayer "RockFest", nor song challenges. A multitap cannot be used to expand the number of controller ports, limiting the game to two guitars, one drum set and one microphone.

Guitar Hero 5 features 85 songs by 83 different artists. Tracks from 30 artists represent their "music-rhythm video game debut". Brian Bright, project director for the game, has called the track list *"fresh"*, with 25% of the songs released in the last 18 months, and more than 50% from the current decade. Unlike previous versions of the Guitar Hero series, where players must work through a career mode to unlock all the songs in the game, all songs in Guitar Hero 5 are unlocked and available to play in any mode from the start.

Bright noted that previously, while "Under Pressure" by Queen and David Bowie was always a song they wanted in Guitar Hero, they could not find the masters for it. However, for Guitar Hero 5, the masters have since *"magically appeared"* and are part of the game's track list. For Nirvana's "Lithium", the master recordings did not have the appropriate tracks to build the note track from, and they opted to use the live version of the song from the 1992 Reading Festival, notably famous for Cobain appearing on a wheelchair at first amid rumors of his failing health, but shown to be a ruse as Cobain took the stage and celebrated the recent birth of his daughter Frances Bean. The song "You and Me" by Attack! Attack! was a result of the band winning a competition to be included in the game.

The fifth main entry to the Guitar Hero series was announced in December 2008, with confirmation of its release by the end of 2009 coming in May 2009, along with the announcement of other new Guitar Hero titles. Some industry analysts questioned whether the proliferation of Guitar Hero games would soon glut the market. Guitar Hero spokesman Eric Hollreiser said consumer research showed continued strong demand for the various versions.

The Party Play mode was inspired by recognizing that past Guitar Hero games made it difficult to jump into without maneuvering through a number of menus and selection screens. The mode was designed to be used at social gatherings, and was adopted to use whatever instrument controllers that players already had available, thus allowing for various other combinations beyond the standard four-person band. This aspect of the game was then brought to the other band modes to allow the game to remain flexible.

A new guitar controller was developed for Guitar Hero 5, sold with bundles with the game though the option for standalone versions has not yet been determined. Like other Guitar Hero controllers, the guitar-shaped unit features five colored fret buttons on the neck of the guitar, a strum bar to mimic the act of strumming, a whammy bar to alter the pitch of a note, and additional buttons specific to the game console for maneuvering through the game's menus. The unit is mostly a redesign of the World Tour model with a new red finish and includes the touchpad that is farther up the neck of the controller, allowing the player to play notes via tapping or to slide along its surface for specially marked sections on the note track. The Guitar Hero 5 unit features a more accurate and responsive touchpad due to it being tracked digitally and with added tactile responses, a more accurate strum bar, and a controller finish that makes it easier to handle with sweaty hands. The game remains compatible with previous Guitar Hero game controllers as well as those from Rock Band and selected other rhythm games.

As part of the game's early promotion, a scavenger hunt contest was announced in the last week of May 2009. Players would need to search for

articles on specific game-related sites to find information on the bands that are to be in Guitar Hero 5, and then enter those bands at the game's official website for a chance to win a series of concert tickets in their area. Through this promotion, a large number of artists in the final track list were revealed.

A viral video in late July 2009 announced the last handful of songs for the game features four naked women walking down a public street, with black censor bars used to cover their bodies but also used to announce the song names. The video attracted the anger of Bill O'Reilly, calling the video *"shameless"* and the models as *"pinheads"*.

For the month of September 2009, players in the US that purchase Guitar Hero 5 would be able to redeem a code with the game to receive a free copy of Guitar Hero: Van Halen prior to its retail release with the packaging's offer sticker (printable if lost), a copy of the receipt and a barcode received upon registration. Also in the UK, when pre-ordering Guitar Hero 5 on various websites players would receive a free copy of Guitar Hero World Tour when requested.

A television commercial was filmed at the Playboy Mansion and was featured in the 29 November 2009 episode of The Girls Next Door.

Guitar Hero 5 was well received upon release. Seth Schiesel of The New York Times called Guitar Hero 5 *"the most enjoyable Guitar Hero game in several years"* and *"generally well-tuned, often exhilarating rock 'n' roll experience"*. Keza MacDonald of Eurogamer commented that there is *"just nothing wrong"* with Guitar Hero 5, given the various stumbling blocks the developers had made from previous iterations of the game, and the way the developers have continued to find new additions to the game. Reviewers greatly appreciated the new features in the game to make it easier to jump in and play music, from the simplification of the menu system to the availability of every song in all the game modes from the start. Erik Brudvig of IGN considers the menu change to be *"one of the best things that Neversoft has done"*, although the menus are a minor part of the game, it removes much of the frustration with the World Tour and other previous Guitar Hero games' menu systems. Arthur Gies of GameSpy noted that by simplification of the interface, *"Neversoft stripped Guitar Hero down to what works and built up from there"*. The changes in Career mode, in which the players need not stick to the same instrument or difficulty throughout, was well appreciated. Brudvig appreciated how this allows the player to complete the Career mode without getting stuck on a song, having to go back to replay the Career mode on other instruments, and that with the addition of song Challenges, provides enough incentive to return to the songs to improve one's performance.

The track list, while well received for the most part, was found to be one of the weaker features. While Helgeson and others noted that the track list was *"extremely diverse and for the most part well selected"*, this diversity was found to work against the game as well. Justin Haywald of 1UP.com noted that with the diverse track list, there would be a good chance players would find songs they liked, but at the same time, would also find songs they loathed. Brudvig noted that while *"the goal was to include a bit of everything"*, the diversity of the track list ensures *"that nobody will like everything on the disc"*. Gies noted that while the guitar difficulty progression in the Career mode was strong and better than in previous games, it leaves the vocals and drummer progression

"all over the place", while Schiesel considered the vocals parts *"somewhat rough"* in comparison to The Beatles: Rock Band. Haywald noted that the singing portions of the game were still weak, with poor indicators to help the player's performance, and with the possibility of multiple vocalists performing at the same time, would make it hard for a player to keep track of his pitch. While reviews appreciated Activision's efforts to allow the importing of songs from previous games, the small amount of tracks that were available at launch felt at odds with the impression that Activision had made of the process prior to the game's release.

On its week of release in the United Kingdom, Guitar Hero 5 was the most purchased title across all game systems, beating The Beatles: Rock Band which was also released during that same week in the country. United States sales of Guitar Hero 5 reached 499,000 units total across all platforms sold, comparable to World Tour's first month sales of 534,000 units. The total revenue for United States sales in September 2009 was $33 million, driving primarily by sales of the standalone copy of the game. The game sold just under 1 million copies worldwide by the end of 2009.

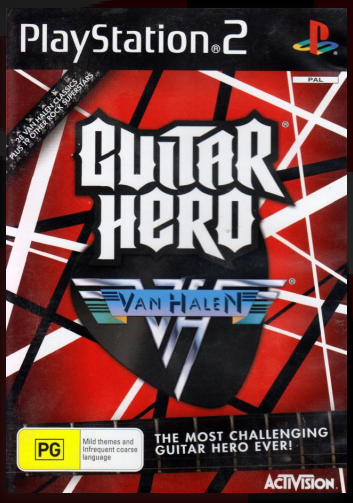
Guitar Hero 5 has been nominated for the "Best Family Game" Interactive Achievement Award from the Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences.

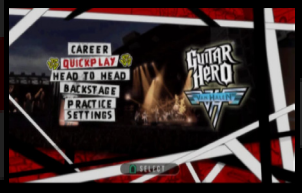
The inclusion of Kurt Cobain as a playable character in the game has been considered a *"strange concept"* by some reviewers, reflecting on the possible influence of commercialization pressures that played into Cobain's suicide. Shortly after the game's release, it was discovered that once players unlocked the Kurt Cobain Character Pack (as well as that for any other of the included famous musicians), they could use that character for any other song on disc, leading to what some have considered to be awkward virtual performances of Cobain singing songs from completely different genres; user-created videos of these performances that had attracted the attention to this issue have since been removed from video-sharing sites like YouTube by Activision. Previous games in the series that feature known musicians also allow for the use of their characters, once unlocked, in other songs, except for the case of Jimi Hendrix in Guitar Hero World Tour, the only posthumous artist to appear in the series prior to Guitar Hero 5. Some have seen this as a scar on Cobain's legacy; Jeff Gerstmann of Giant Bomb commented that *"it's the near-mythic legacy he left behind and the way the Nirvana catalog has been protected from commercial interests over the years that makes this stuff so harsh"* on his observation of such performances. Tim Walker of The Independent contrasted Cobain's *"posthumous humiliation"* to the appearance of virtual characters based on living artists that have appeared in rhythm music games, noting that deceased artists do not have the same fair consideration as live artists that can opt to license their images for such rhythm games. Seth Schiesel of The New York Times countered these arguments, noting that as long as no legal contracts were broken, Cobain and the other artists in the game *"are too big and too important to be damaged in a cultural sense by mere inclusion in a video game"*.

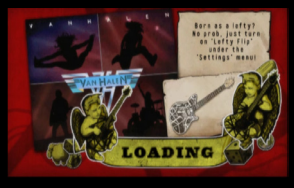
On her Twitter account, the degenerate, Courtney Love, expressed her anger at Cobain's representation in the game and threatened legal action alongside other companies that represent Cobain's intellectual property. Love further stated that she received no monetary arrangements for Cobain's appearance, in response to comments that believe Love had *"sold out"* to Activision and from a statement by Activision CEO Dan Rosensweig claiming that the Cobain estate has *"cashed the cheque"*. Both Dave Grohl and Krist Novoselic have made statements disapproving the inclusion of Cobain as an unlockable character in the game and have requested that he be locked to only Nirvana songs.

5.9

Guitar Hero: Van Halen







Developer	Neversoft Entertainment
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) December 22, 2009
Genre	Music
Mode	1-4 Players

As with the previous games Guitar Hero: Aerosmith and Guitar Hero: Metallica, the game features 25 songs from Van Halen along with 19 additional songs from selected artists that have been inspired by the group. The game was released in retail for the PS2, PS3, Xbox 360, and Wii.

Guitar Hero: Van Halen is similar to the preceding band-centric game, Guitar Hero: Metallica, featuring support for four players in a single band on lead and bass guitar, drums, and vocals. The game is based on the engine originating from Guitar Hero World Tour, and thus does not feature the additions that are present in Guitar Hero 5, such as drop-in/drop-out play.

Only the current members of the band—Eddie Van Halen, David Lee Roth, Alex Van Halen and Wolfgang Van Halen—are playable avatars in the game for the Van Halen songs; former band members Sammy Hagar, Gary Cherone and Michael Anthony are not included. The band appear as they did in 2009 but, by completing challenges in the game, players can unlock their older appearances from the *"spandex era [...] with the big hair and tight pants". Despite not being alive during this period of the band's history, Wolfgang Van Halen's avatar has a retro outfit copied from the dice-shirt-and-patchwork-jeans getup worn by his father in the video for "Panama".*

Like the other band-centric Guitar Hero games, Guitar Hero: Van Halen includes 25 songs from the band Van Halen, including three guitar solos by Eddie Van Halen, in addition to 19 guest acts. The Van Halen songs in the game are taken during the time when David Lee Roth was in the band, and do not include any works during the period that Sammy Hagar and Gary Cherone were band members; Activision's head of music licensing, Tim Riley, notes that the lack of such material was not due to any demands or requests made by David Lee Roth. Riley also stated that most of the guest acts were selected by Wolfgang Van Halen, at the suggestion of Roth.

While the game was formally announced by Activision on May 7, 2009, several sources reported a month earlier that Van Halen was in development. USK, the German software ratings board, posted a content rating for a Van Halen-based game in the series. GameStop temporarily listed the game for preorder during the month of April.

Throughout September 2009, people who purchased or preordered Guitar Hero 5 in the US were given a code which they could redeem to receive a free copy of Guitar Hero: Van Halen prior to its retail release. These copies began arriving to customers in early October for PS2, Xbox 360, and Wii players, while the PlayStation 3 version was delayed due to a printing error. The game came in a cardboard sleeve with cover art indicating that it was for promotional use.

Early reviews of the promotional version of the game received by redeeming a code that came with Guitar Hero 5 were critical of the game. IGN's Erik Brudvig rated the game 4.9/10, citing problems with the

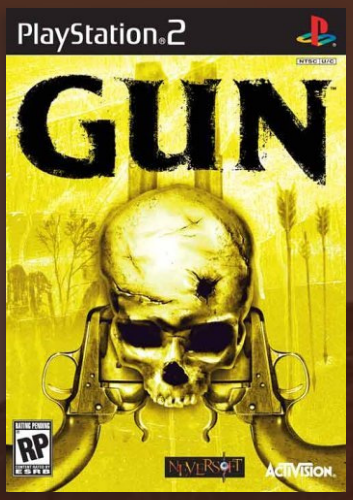
lack of relevance of Van Halen relative to the culture of the 2000s, including having their avatars based on their current appearances rather than that of their 80s heyday, the lack of songs from Sammy Hagar's period in the band, and the lack of features since introduced with Guitar Hero 5. Brudvig ultimately stated that those who got the game free through the Guitar Hero 5 promotion *"got what they paid for"*. Robert Workman of Game Daily was less critical of the title, but still noted that the game lacked features, including some mention of Hagar and Gary Cherone and songs from their period with the band, and felt that the title was below the quality of Guitar Hero: Metallica. Both Brudvig and Workman commented positively on the sound recordings and the note tracking of the Van Halen songs.

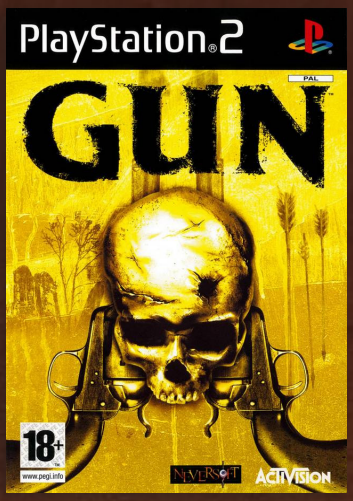
Guitar Hero: Van Halen reviews following its release were similarly negative. Philip Horton of The Telegraph was critical of the game's song selection, the band's modern appearance, and the lack of any additional extras compared with either the previous band-centric games or Guitar Hero 5, and described it as *"the weakest offering in the series to date"*. Kate Carter of The Guardian commented that the game is *"neither one thing or the other"*, as it neither succeeds at bringing anything new to the Guitar Hero series nor fully pays tribute to Van Halen. Computer and Video Games' review complained about the *"shoddy character models"* and described it as *"the laziest Guitar Hero yet"*, and Nathan Meunier of GamePro said that while the Van Halen songs were good and challenging, the remaining tracks did not fit the theme of the game, and that *"the lackluster presentation makes the game feel more like a glorified track pack than a true homage"*.

Guitar Hero: Van Halen sold fewer than 75,000 units across all platforms in North America from December 22 to 31, 2009, according to NPD Group. As of April 2010, the game has sold fewer than 250,000 copies worldwide, with only 95,000 units sold in North America. These numbers do not include copies of the game distributed in conjunction with Guitar Hero 5.

7.7

Gun





Developer	Neversoft Entertainment
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) November 8, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Gun is a Revisionist Western-themed action-adventure. Gun is set in the American Old West, specifically in Arizona, Colorado, Kansas and New Mexico in the year 1880. This includes cities and badlands with populated environments that stretch from the mountains to the plains of early Dodge City, Kansas. The story, written by Randall Jahnson, features several veteran actors, including Ron Perlman, Lance Henriksen, Kris Kristofferson, Tom Skerrit and the lead, played by Thomas Jane. Players take the role of Colton White, a young gunslinger whose father is killed by an Indian tribe led by Reverend Reed. Just before passing away, his father hands him a token and reveals Colton are not his son. Sworn to avenge his death, Colton pursue the killers and unravel the secrets surrounding the item. Although he are on his own, temporary alliances can be formed with townspeople, Apaches and posse members, but they can easily turn against him.

Gun features an open world environment, including side-missions that add to the story. Players control the protagonist, Colton White, from a third-person perspective. While traveling from town to town, bandit attacks are frequent and players must either escape or defend themselves.

Players can hunt and kill various animals like buffalo, wild horses, and even stray dogs and farm animals. The player can also cause mayhem within communities, but can attract attention from lawmakers and other gunslingers by doing so. They act as gunslingers protecting righteousness or seek reputation as they face resistance fighters, local lawmen, renegade soldiers and vengeful Apaches and Blackfoot. A Town Patience meter goes down every time a civilian is killed. Once the patience meter reaches zero, a showdown ensues between the player and the locals.

Several minigames are included in Gun. As the player progresses through the game, they can choose to complete side missions, including poker tournaments, cattle herding, law enforcement and bounty hunting. Players can purchase upgrades using money obtained from these optional activities and by mining gold veins.

Players can wield a revolver and switch between rifles, shotguns, various explosives, and bows. There are a variety of types of arrows to choose from, including ordinary, flaming, and, if unlocked, explosive arrows. Throwing knives are available in Gun Showdown. Attacking and killing enemies fills up a Quickdraw gauge which, when activated, slows down time like bullet time, switches the game to a first-person perspective and gives the player unlimited ammunition for a short duration, allowing the player to take on a significant number of enemies.

The player can switch from first person to third person overhead camera with certain weapons. There are two handheld explosives available in the game: dynamite and whiskey bombs. Dynamite explodes after a short delay, while whiskey bombs instantly ignite when they hit the ground. Enemies

may roll to attempt to avoid explosives. Barrels of TNT are scattered around the environment and during missions, encouraging players to use barrels to set traps or throw and use the Quickdraw mode to shoot them and detonate the TNT.

Melee combat is also emphasised, with enemies randomly charging at the player throughout the game. Players can use a bowie knife, a tomahawk and a cavalry saber. They can use enemies as a human shield, and dispatch them by slitting their throats or knocking them out if the enemy has a bounty. Players can also scalp a dying enemy with a scalping knife. Stealth plays a part in many missions as well, and players are encouraged to use bows, melee. Horseback combat is also featured, and is an important aspect of the game. Fast-paced chases are featured, and players can shoot while riding. Both the player's and the enemies' horses can be killed. While riding a horse players can do close-quarter combat with any melee weapon they possess. Trampling or running over enemies is also a way of dispatching them while on horseback.

Gun received mostly positive reviews from critics. IGN stated that *"Neversoft has finally made a good game besides all their Tony Hawk"*. GameSpot described it as *"initially a 19th-century Grand Theft Auto"*, while GameSpy addressed it as having *"just about everything you could want from a game set in the Wild West"*. In its first month, the game sold 225,000 units across the four systems for which it was initially released. According to TRST sales data, the game had sold over 1.4 million units in the US by October 2008.

The Association for American Indian Development declared a boycott of the game, claiming that it contains *"derogatory, harmful, and inaccurate depictions of American Indians."* Featured on the Association's boycott-specific website was a petition demanding that Activision clean up various aspects of the game before re-releasing it to retailers; the group called for a worldwide recall of the game if the revision was not completed. The site suggested that a game in which players were required to kill members of specific ethnic groups, like African-Americans, Irish, Mexicans or Jews would never be tolerated, *"but apparently, killing Indians is still fair game."* The site also mentioned events and revelations that take place later in the game's story, but assert that they do not address the problematic portions from earlier sections of the game.

On the now-defunct GamerGod.com website, contributor, Beth Dillon, concluded on January 31, 2005, that:

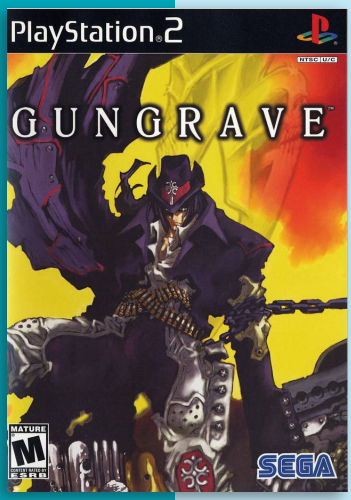
"Even though the historical period portrayed in Gun was fraught with racism, Activision's decision to publish a racially stereotyped video game represents a serious misstep in social responsibility. Like Custer's Revenge, Gun provokes wonder. In this case, the industry has unfortunately bought into the popular misconception that games are frivolous because they are made for fun."

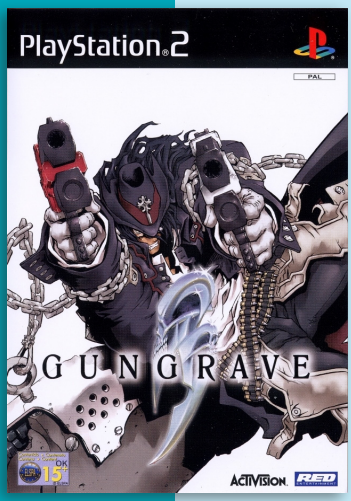
The game's publisher issued this brief statement:

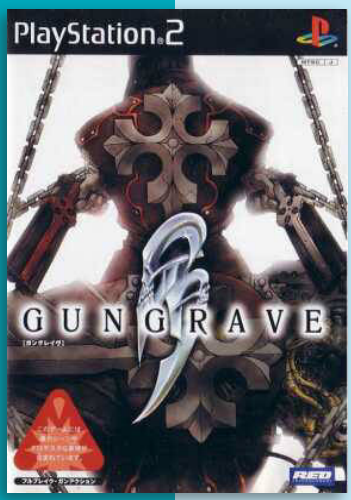
"Activision does not condone or advocate any of the atrocities that occurred in the American West during the 1800s. Gun was designed to reflect the harshness of life on the American frontier at that time. It was not Activision's intention to offend any race or ethnic group with Gun, and we apologize to any who might have been offended by the game's depiction of historical events which have been conveyed not only through video games but through films, television programming, books and other media."

Gungrave

6.5







JNP

Developer	RED Entertainment
Publisher	Sega, (eu) Activision
Release date	(jp) July 18, 2002
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

Gungrave is a third-person shooter and follows its main character, Grave, through a variety of stages on a path of revenge. Grave is a long dead assassin sent back from the dead to annihilate endless hordes of enemies.

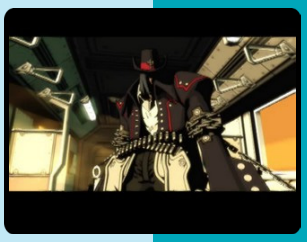
As a third-person shooter, Gungrave focuses entirely on combat and forgoes the puzzle solving aspects of some of its forebears. The player advances through hallway-like stages, but has a free range of motion in these areas. The player confronts wave after wave of fighters en route to an end-level boss. Combat varies between gunplay with enemies at a distance and simple melee combat at close range, and the game rates the amount of flair the player uses to destroy everyone and every thing in sight.

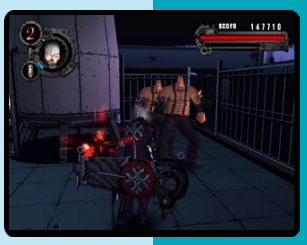
Beyond the Grave is equipped with a damage-absorbing energy shield that can absorb a large amount of damage in addition to his life bar. This shield appears as a blue bar alongside Beyond the Grave's life bar in the game's heads-up display. When the shield is fully depleted, the player is highly vulnerable and further damage reduces the character's health level rapidly. However, the shield will recharge fully if no damage is sustained for a brief period of time.

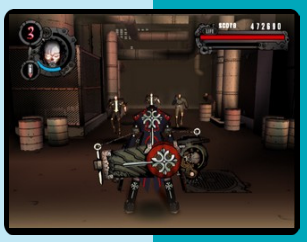
By performing well during stages, the player can unlock special attacks such as machine guns or rockets launched from the coffin on Beyond the Grave's back.

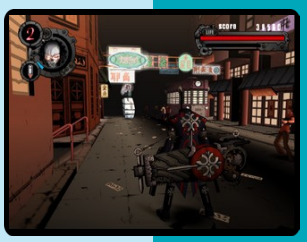
Stages and some important events within stages are separated by anime cut-scenes featuring art by Nightow. This is where the game's story takes place. Characters are expanded on and the player is given back story that is not obvious through gameplay alone.

While the game play received moderate reviews, Gungrave received acclaim for the character designs provided by series creator Yasuhiro Nightow (Trigun) and mechanical designs provided by Kōsuke Fujishima (Oh My Goddess! series, You're Under Arrest series, Sakura Wars series). Both artist's respective styles helped give the game a distinct feel.

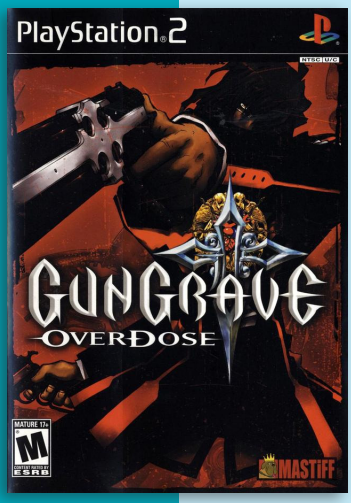






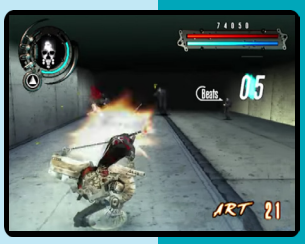


Gungrave: Overdose



Developer	RED Entertainment
Publisher	RED Entertainment, (us) Mastiff, (eu) Play It!, DreamCatcher Interactive, System 3, SCEA
Release date	(jp) March 4, 2004
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

6.8



J N P

Gungrave: Overdose picks up where its predecessor left off, follows its main character through a variety of stages on a path of revenge. It is the only known title fully developed by animation studio Ikusabune, as the previous title was developed by Red Entertainment (Ikusabune provided animation and cinematics in the first game).

Preserving Yasuhiro Nightow's flair and artistic style, this outing adds new playable characters to the series and a new story, in which Grave resumes his tale as an unlikely anti-hero tracking down the sadistic son of a Mafia boss who has struck a deal with a symbiotic seed bent on taking over the Earth.

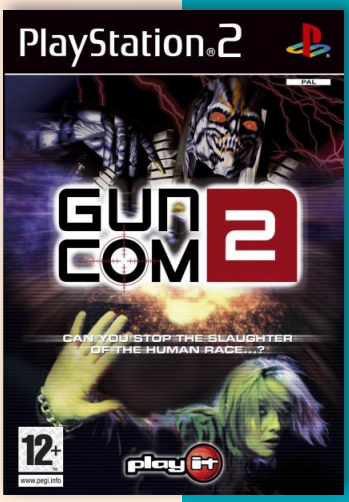
The game was received more favorably by critics than the first game, but still received mixed reviews according to Metacritic. Many critics praised the game's longer length, IGN citing that the game can easily last for more than 6 hours, which they say is in stark comparison to the first game's 2 hour length.

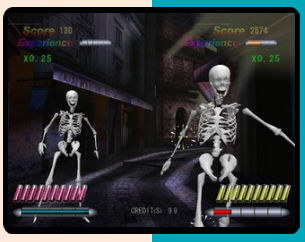
Guncom 2

6.7

J P

Developer	Ecole
Publisher	Ecole, (eu) Play It
Release date	(jp) November 27, 2003
Genre	Light-gun
Mode	1-2 Players





Guncom 2, also known as Death Crimson, is a light-gun game similar in style to House of the Dead where the player shoots at enemies that pop up on screen and save innocents from the monsters. The player can also power-up the "Crimson" pistols by shooting death flowers that will turn their firepower into machine guns to decimate hordes of enemies. There is also a health meter that will increase in size by successfully shooting enemies, gaining experience points. Once enough points are obtained, the health bar will increase, however missing enemies or shooting civilians will take away points.

"mobygames.com"

Gundam Musou Special

7.2

Developer	Koei
Publisher	Namco Bandai Games
Release date	(jp) February 28, 2008
Genre	Beat-'em-up
Mode	1-2 Players

Gundam Musou Special is an expanded port of Dynasty Warriors: Gunda. The game feature new scenarios and mobile suits.

Like in the original, the single-player mode is divided into two sections. Official Mode features playable characters in stages set within the continuity of the Gundam Universal Century timeline. The story in the Original Mode is almost the same as the crossover manga Mobile Suit Vs. Giant God.

Gundam Seed: Federation vs. Z.A.F.T.

7.9

Developer	Bandai
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) November 17, 2005
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

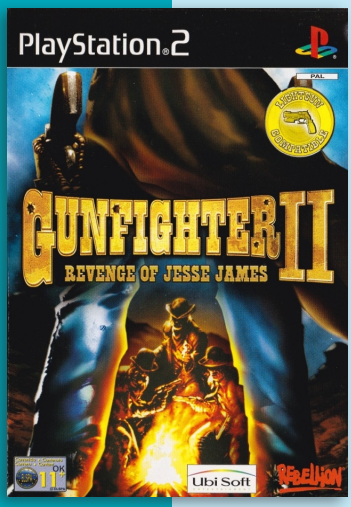
Gundam Seed: O.M.N.I. vs Z.A.F.T. is a third person arcade game based on the Gundam Seed franchise. Similarly to Mobile Suit Gundam: Gundam vs. Zeta Gundam, the player can choose to ally themselves with either O.M.N.I., Z.A.F.T. or Blue Cosmos and fight against the other factions. The PS2 port featured new pilots and units from the sequel Gundam Seed Destiny, as well as new unlockable features.

The two game modes include an Arcade Mode and a Free Battle/VS Mode. The Arcade mode provides the same basic gameplay as the original arcade, with the added bonus that players may configure various fight settings to customize the gameplay. The AI skill level, along with Damage dealt/received, round time, boost gauge, and other options for Arcade battles, may be adjusted in Game Options. Players may also choose to engage in cooperative gameplay with a friend in the Arcade multiplayer co-op mode. However, not all units in the game are playable in this mode.

Versus Mode features all playable units in the game, including units players cannot select in Arcade Mode. This mode supports up to 2 players or play against 3 AI opponents in a free-for-all deathmatch or in teams.

Gunfighter II: Revenge of Jesse James

6.6



Developer	Rebellion
Publisher	Ubisoft
Release date	(eu) March 28, 2003
Genre	Light-gun
Mode	1-2 Players

Gunfighter II: Revenge of Jesse James is the sequel to the 2001 game Gunfighter: The Legend of Jesse James. It is compatible with the GunCon 2 controller. The game's plot is set in the American Old West. The game's protagonist is Jesse James, an American outlaw who lived in the 19th century.

Gameplay is very similar to the original instalment, where players with on-rail mechanics.

P

Gungriffon Blaze

7.3

Developer	Game Arts
Publisher	Capcom, (us) Working Designs, (eu) Swing! D.
Release date	(jp) August 10, 2000
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

GunGriffon Blaze is a mech action game released as a Playstation 2 launch title. The game is set in the not too distant future with a world divided into rival factions. Players take the command of a special unit of mech suits known as AWGS-Class infiltration units. The game puts the player through six different world theaters with adjustable difficulty levels.

J N P

Guts da!! Mori no Ishimatsu

Developer	Aruze Corp
Publisher	Aruze Corp
Release date	(jp) March 31, 2005
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

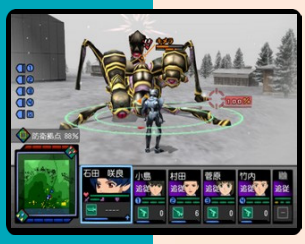
Gatsu!! Mori no Ishimatsu is a pachinko machine simulator developed and published by Aruze Corp, which was released in Japan in 2005.

The theme of the pachinko game is based aroud Mori Shinosuke, a famous figure in Japan after a meal.

J

8.0

Gunparade Orchestra: Shiro no Shou



J

Developer	Alfa System
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) January 12, 2006
Genre	Action, Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Shiro no Shou is the first part of a PS2 trilogy in the Gun Parade series. The games are (supposedly) set in the same universe as Gunparade March, released on the PlayStation, but there is no real continuity from the first series.

The timeline is December 1999 in an alternate reality where World War II was followed by an alien attack. With massive casualties, the defense forces have to rely on teenage soldiers as soon as they're of age to go into battle.

By using weapons and bombs, the teams of defenders beat back the monsters. The interaction scenarios that take place at school serve to reinforce relationships with fellow students. The stronger the bond between students, the more they'll cooperate like a cohesive force during missions.

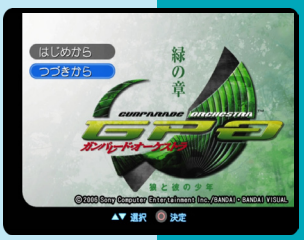
The limited edition of Gun Parade Orchestra, packaged in a large cardboard container, include; a DVD-Video OVA, a music CD, a 108 GDP Insignia Metal Tag and a 100-page art book.

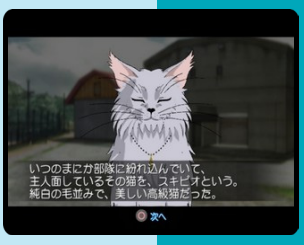
Gunparade Orchestra: Midori no Shou

Developer	Alfa System
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) March 30, 2006
Genre	Action, Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Midori no Shou is the second part of the PS2 trilogy in the Gun Parade series. The game features more escapades at a not-so-average high school where trainees defend the school and the city they're in from invaders known as Genju. The action consists of interactive scenarios, going to class, and 3D run 'n gun action where the player takes direct control of a deft and agile student soldier who's outfitted in a nimble suit of armor.

The Limited Edition includes a bonus 25-minute OVA DVD, a Soundtrack CD and a book.





J

"psxdatacenter.com"

Gunparade Orchestra: Ao no Shou

Developer	Alfa System
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) July 20, 2006
Genre	Action, Adventure
Mode	1 Player

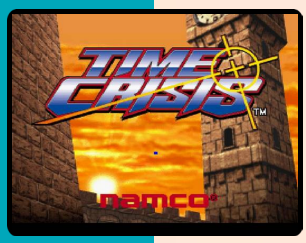
The conclusive chapter takes place in the summer where the 109th ISP patrols and protects Chichi-jima, an island located in the Bonins (aka Ogasawara Islands) ~600 miles south of Tokyo.

The Limited Edition includes a bonus 25-minute DVD which contains an OVA episode of the Gunparade Orchestra Ao no Shou animation, a Soundtrack CD and a book.

"psxdatacenter.com"

8.2

Gunvari Collection + Time Crisis



Developer	Namco
Publisher	Namco
Release date	(jp) December 12, 2002
Genre	Light-gun, Compilation
Mode	1-2 Players

Gunvari Collection + Time Crisis pairs the full Point Blank trilogy with the original Time Crisis. The games included are PlayStation ports of GunBullet, GunBarl, GunBalina and Time Crisis.

The GunBullet (Point Black) series is a puzzle/light gun arcade shooter featuring hundreds of shooting mini-games. The premise of the game is based around "quick fire" rounds that tests players' accuracy and reactions.

The game is structured in a very random manner with four non-related stages being displayed for players to choose from each time they complete a stage. Stages are comprised of accuracy tests such as having to shoot the apple off the head of a far away character with only one bullet or judgment tests, such as killing only bad guys in a sea of good guys. Other stages involve solving puzzles by shooting out keys on a keyboard to spell words.

Time Crisis is a first person rail shooter similar to Virtua Cop and The House of the Dead, in that the player holds a light gun and fires at on-screen enemies. Time Crisis is best known for its cover system, in which players can duck behind cover to avoid enemy fire and reload their weapons.

GunCon2 Bundle

Gunslinger Girl Vol. 1

7.1

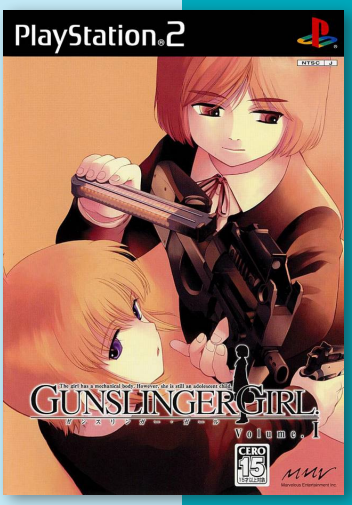
J

Developer	Dimps Corporation
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) April 8, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

Gunslinger Girl is based on a manga by Yu Aida. The game follows the 3-D action and adventures of a young girl named Henrietta who kills at the behest of the agency that has taken her in.

The first production includes a bonus DVD with episodes 1-5 of the animation and a very large-sized 32-page artbook which contains artwork inside.

"psxdatacenter.com"



Gunslinger Girl Volume II

7.1

Developer	Dimps Corporation
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) June 17, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

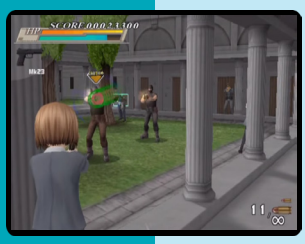
In Gunslinger Vol. 2, the girls continue their work in Italy where new missions and killings await. Gunslinger is played similar to standard Gun-con games, except the Dual Shock 2 serves as the weapon of choice and the protagonist may run and hide behind various obstacles during fire fights.

Similar to the first game, each copy of Gunslinger Vol. 2 includes a bonus DVD which contains episodes 6 to 9 of the animation.

J

Gunslinger Girl Volume III

7.3



J

Developer	Bandai
Publisher	Bandai
Release date	(jp) August 19, 2004
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

As in the two previous titles, Gunslinger Girl Vol. 3 lets players take the role of a girl whose memories have been erased by a big corporation of assassins.

Like before, the game comes with a bonus DVD featuring three episodes from the anime.

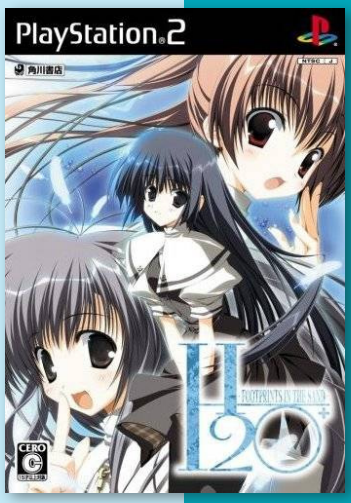
PS2
PlayStation 2

H2O+: Footprints in the Sand

7.7

J

Developer	Regista
Publisher	Kadokawa
Release date	(jp) April 24, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

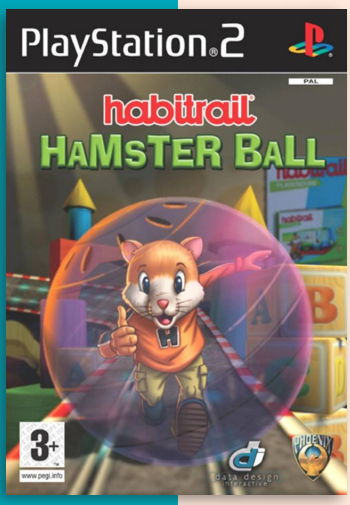


H2O's story revolves around Takuma Hirose, a blind junior-high school student. After his mother died, it left a deep emotional scar on him, which caused him to become very lonely and reserved. Due to this, Takuma and his uncle move from the city out into a rural area and Takuma is enrolled into a new junior-high school. At his new school, he meets several new girls, though three of whom he gets to know the most out of anyone else.

"psxdatacenter.com"

Habitrail: Hamster Ball

7.0



Developer	Data Design Interactive
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2005
Genre	Puzzle
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

P

Habitrail Hamster Ball is an action game based around controlling a hamster encapsulated in a ball rolling through environments such as a castle or a children's playroom with platforms, small ledges and obstacles. A level is completed by rolling between finish posts. Moving forward without interruption builds up a speed meter and causes the hamster to go faster.

"mobygames.com"

Hachi-One Diver

8.1

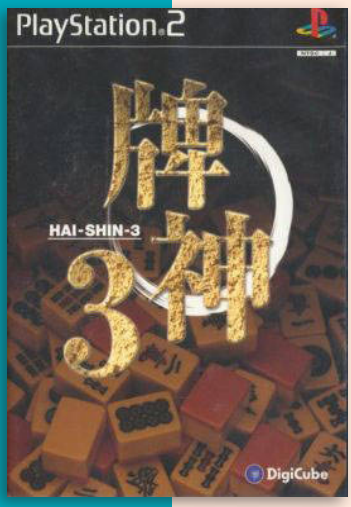
J

Developer	SilverStar
Publisher	SilverStar
Release date	(jp) September 17, 2009
Genre	Adventure, Board
Mode	1-2 Players

Based on the manga by Shibata Yokusaru, Hachi-One Diver on the PS2 features a Story Mode where players take on the role of Sugata Kentarou. Sugata is a Shogi gambler who earns his keep by facing opponents in Shogi parlors and contests. But he is devastated when he is beaten completely by a young woman known as "Ukeshi" who takes any challenges and never loses. As Shogi means everything to him, he decides to train himself harder.

Hai-Shin 3

7.8



Developer DigiCube
Publisher DigiCube
Release date (jp) December 19, 2002
Genre Board
Mode 1 Player

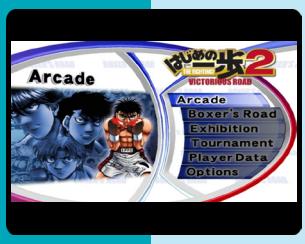
Hai-Shin 3 is the sequel to the Playstation games Pro Logic Mahjong Hai Shin & Hai-Shin 2. It is a mahjong game with 9 different kind of boards and 2 different game modes:

Story Mode: In this mode players can choose the tournament that they wants to play each month, if they wins he will earn points to buy prizes.
In Free Mode players choose between different computer opponents to play a mahjong game.

J

Hajime no Ippo 2: Victorious Road

8.0



J

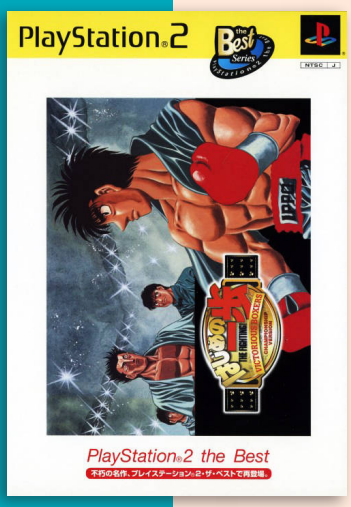
Developer New
Publisher ESP Software
Release date (jp) January 29, 2004
Genre Sports
Mode 1-2 Players

Hajime no Ippo 2: Victorious Road, sequel to Victorious Boxers: Ippo's Road to Glory, was released on January 29, 2004 exclusively in Japan, and features a fighter-creation mode and new boxers.

The game, adapted from the Fighting Spirit manga series, features a mix of simulation and arcade style boxing.

Hajime no Ippo: Victorious Boxers - Championship Version

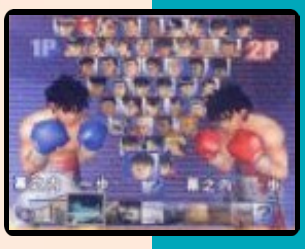
7.0



Developer ESP Software
Publisher ESP Software
Release date (jp) June 27, 2002
Genre Sports
Mode 1-2 Players

Hajime no Ippo: Victorious Boxers - Championship Version is a Sports game, published by ESP Software, which was released in Japan in 2002.

In addition to the main single mode, a VS mode is also included. Players can choose from 40 different characters.



J

Hakarena Heart

7.0

J

Developer	Russel
Publisher	Russel
Release date	(jp) December 13, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

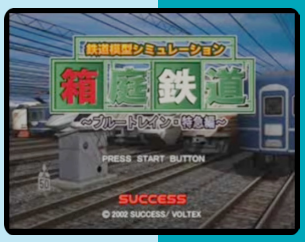
The story is about a girl named Himemiya Yukari. Everything seems normal until one day after school she runs into some guy who grabs her by the arm saying he "needs her" and then suddenly a phantom thief on a horse shows up and saves her. Everything just gets weirder from there when suddenly the guy who grabbed her comes to live at their house claiming to be her "cousin" wants to study Japanese culture.

"breadmasterlee.com"

Hakoniwa Tetsudou: Blue Train Tokkyuuhen

Developer	Voltex
Publisher	Success
Release date	(jp) May 30, 2002
Genre	Simulation
Mode	1 Player

Hakoniwa Tetsudou Bluetrain Tokkyuuhen is a train simulator. Players can create a town where the Blue Train line from JR Hokkaido factors as a convenient form of transportation along with other famous train lines from Japan. Players may position buildings, attractions and other venues to draw foot traffic and visitors to towns which lie adjacent to the railroad.



J

Hakushaku to Yousei: Yume to Kizuna ni Omoi o Hasete

5.0

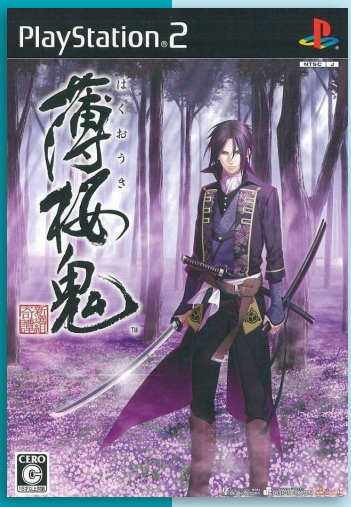
J

Developer	5pb
Publisher	5pb
Release date	(jp) April 30, 2009
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The story, set in Victorian Britain, follows the adventures of 17-year old Lydia Carlton, nicknamed the "Fairy Doctor" due to her interest and understanding of fairies. Her life takes a turn when she meets Edgar J.C Ashenbert, the "Legendary Blue Knight Earl" and his crew on a sea voyage to London. Edgar hires her as an advisor during his quest to obtain a treasured sword.

Hakuouki

6.9



Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) September 18, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Hakuoki: Shinsengumi Kitan is a Samurai Romance game set at the end of the Edo period of Japanese history. One of the few example of the Japanese sub-genre of Otome, which centers on story-driven romance from a female perspective, the game features a blend of adventure and decision-dependant gameplay. Additional features include: multiple possible endings depending on choices made, and anime style animation.

J

Hakuouki: Reimeiroku

7.4

J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) October 28, 2010
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Reimeiroku is a prequel to the main Hakuoki game. This is a story of a nameless youth, in a time of turmoil at the end of the Edo period. The protagonist, Ibuki Ryunosuke, is on the brink of death until he's found by Serizawa, the current leader of the Shinsengumi (prior to Kondo) who says to come with him. Ryunosuke decides he values his life so he decides to come along.

Hakuouki: Zuisouroku

7.4

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) August 27, 2009
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Zuisouroku fills in the gaps in the Hakuouki story. Players can see the everyday lives of Chizuru and the Shinsengumi members. Discover stories and unlock scenarios that are only mentioned briefly in the main story.

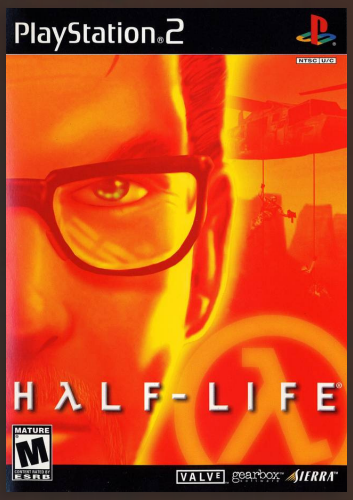
The limited edition of Hakuouki: Zuisouroku includes a Voice Drama CD and a 2009-2010 Calendar.

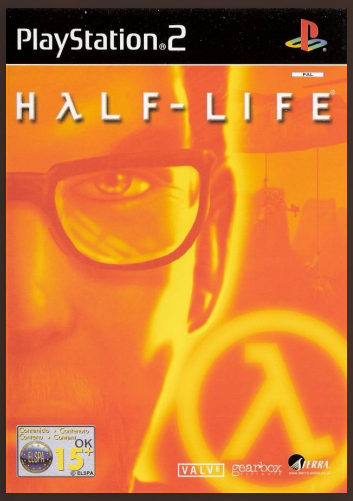
"psxdatacenter.com"

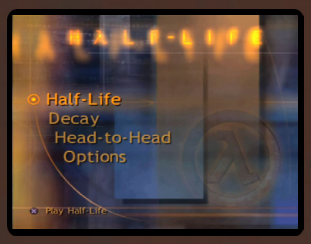
J

8.7

Half-Life







Developer	Gearbox Software
Publisher	Sierra Entertainment, (eu) Vivendi Universal
Release date	(us) November 11, 2001
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

Half-Life (stylized as HΛLF-LIFE) is a science fiction first-person shooter developed by Valve and originally published by Sierra Studios for Windows in 1998. It was Valve's debut product and the first in the Half-Life series.

Players assume the role of Dr. Gordon Freeman, who must fight his way out of the Black Mesa research facility after an experiment goes wrong, fighting enemies and solving puzzles.

The game's plot was originally inspired by the video games Doom and Quake (both PC games produced by id Software), Stephen King's short story/novella The Mist, and an episode of The Outer Limits called "The Borderland". It was later developed by Valve's in-house writer and author, Marc Laidlaw, who wrote the books Dad's Nuke and The 37th Mandala.

Half-Life is a first-person shooter that requires the player to perform combat tasks and puzzle solving to advance through the game. Unlike most of its peers at the time, Half-Life used scripted sequences, such as a Vortigaunt ramming down a door, to advance major plot points. Compared to most first-person shooters of the time, which relied on cut-scene intermissions to detail their plotlines, Half-Life's story is told mostly by means of scripted sequences (bar one short cutscene), keeping the player in control of the first-person viewpoint. In line with this the player rarely loses the ability to control Gordon, who never speaks and is never actually seen in the game; the player sees "through his eyes" for the entire length of the game. Half-Life has no "levels"; it instead divides the game into chapters, whose titles flash on the screen as the player moves through the game. Progress through the world is continuous, except for short pauses for loading.

The game regularly integrates puzzles, such as navigating a maze of conveyor belts or using nearby boxes to build a small staircase to the next area the player must travel to. Some puzzles involve using the environment to kill an enemy, like turning on a steam valve to spray hot steam at their enemies. There are few "bosses" in the conventional sense, where the player defeats a superior opponent by direct confrontation. Instead, such organisms occasionally define chapters, and the player is generally expected to use the terrain, rather than firepower, to kill the "boss". Late in the game, the player receives a "long jump module" for the HEV suit, which allows the player to increase the horizontal distance and speed of jumps by crouching before jumping. The player must rely on this ability to navigate various platformer-style jumping puzzles in Xen toward the end of the game.

For the most part the player battles through the game alone, but is occasionally assisted by non-player characters; specifically security guards and scientists who help the player; the guards will fight alongside the player, and both guards and scientists can assist in reaching new areas and impart relevant plot information. A wide array of alien enemies populate the game, including headcrabs, bull-

squids, headcrab zombies, and Vortigaunts. The player also faces human opponents, in particular, Hazardous Environment Combat Unit (HECU) Marines and black ops assassins who are dispatched to contain the extra-dimensional threats and silence all witnesses.

Valve, based in Kirkland, Washington, was founded in 1996 by former Microsoft employees Mike Harrington and Gabe Newell. For its first product, Valve settled on a concept for a horror FPS using the Quake engine licensed from id Software. Valve eventually modified 70% of the engine's code, adding skeletal animation and Direct3D support.

According to designer Harry Teasley, id's 1993 FPS Doom was a major influence, and the team wanted Half-Life to *"scare you like Doom did"*. The project had the working title Quiver, after the Arrowhead military base from Stephen King's 1980 novella The Mist, an early inspiration for the game. The name Half-Life was chosen because it was evocative of the theme, not clichéd, and had a corresponding visual symbol: the Greek letter λ (lower-case lambda), which represents the decay constant in the half-life equation.

Valve struggled to find a publisher, as many believed the game was too ambitious for a first-time developer. Sierra On-Line signed Valve for a one-game deal as it was interested in making a 3D action game, especially one based on the Quake engine. Valve first showed Half-Life in early 1997; it was a success at Electronic Entertainment Expo that year, where Valve demonstrated the game's animation and artificial intelligence.

Valve aimed for a November 1997 release to compete with Quake II. By September 1997, the team found that while they had built a number of innovative aspects in weapons, enemies, and level design, the game was not fun and there was little design cohesion. The company postponed the release and reworked every level. They took a novel approach of assigning a small team to build a prototype level containing every element in the game, and then spent a month iterating on the level. When the rest of the team played the level, which designer Ken Birdwell described as *"Die Hard meets Evil Dead"*, they agreed to use it as a baseline. The team developed three theories about what made the level fun. First, the level had a number of interesting things happen in it and all when the player came into near proximity of the event, rather than based on time elements, so that the player would set the pace of the level. Second, the level had means to respond to any player action, even for something as simple as adding graphic decals to wall textures to show a bullet impact. Finally, the level warned the player of imminent danger to allow them to avoid it, rather than killing the player with no warning.

To move forward with this unified design, Valve sought a game designer, but found no one suitable for the job. Instead, Valve decided to create the *"cabal"*, initially a group of six individuals from across all departments that worked primarily for six months straight in six-hour meetings four days a week. The cabal was responsible for all elements of design, including level layouts, key events, enemy designs, narrative, and the introduction of new gameplay elements relative to the story. The collaboration proved successful, and once the cabal had come to decisions on types of gameplay elements that would be needed, mini-cabals formed from other departments most affected by the choice were formed to implement these elements. Membership in the main cabal rotated, since commitment required created burnout. The cabal produced a 200-page design

document detailing nearly every aspect of the game. They also produced a 30-page document for the game's narrative, and hired a writer, novelist Marc Laidlaw, to help manage that script for the game to assure in-game consistency. The soundtrack was composed by Kelly Bailey.

Within a month of the cabal's formation, the other team members started detailed game development, and within another month, began playtesting through Sierra. The cabal were intimately involved with playtesting, monitoring the player but otherwise not interacting, as to take the player's feedback, including any confusion or inability to solve a game's puzzle, into action items to be fixed on the next iteration of a game. Later, with most of the main adjustments made, the team included means to benchmark players' actions which they then collected and interpreted statistically to further fine-tune levels. Between the cabal and playtesting, Valve identified and removed parts that proved unenjoyable. Birdwell said that while there were struggles at first, the cabal approach was critical for Half-Life's success, and was reused for Team Fortress 2 from the start.

A few days prior to the release, the developers discovered an error in the source code. Developers fixed the error by adding corrections into a single line of the source code. Much of the detail of Half-Life's development has been lost; according to employee Erik Johnson, two or three months before release, their volume shadow service *"exploded"*; they had to compile what they could from was otherwise stored on individual computers at that time, meaning that only the last month of technical changes were preserved. This included saving the source to GoldSrc.

Valve president Gabe Newell: *"Half-Life in many ways was a reactionary response to the trivialization of the experience of the first-person genre. Many of us had fallen in love with video games because of the phenomenological possibilities of the field and felt like the industry was reducing the experiences to least common denominators rather than exploring those possibilities. Our hope was that building worlds and characters would be more compelling than building shooting galleries."*

Half-Life was released in November 1998. The revised version of Half-Life shown at E3 1998 was given Game Critics Awards for "Best PC Game" and "Best Action Game". Valve released two demos for Half-Life. The first, Half-Life: Day One, contained the first fifth of the game and was distributed with certain graphic cards. The second demo, Half-Life: Uplink, was released on February 12, 1999, featuring heavily revised variations of levels cut during Half-Life's development phase.

According to Gabe Newell, Half-Life was budgeted with the expectation of lifetime sales around 180,000 units. However, following its November 19 release, the game became a surprise hit. In the United States, Half-Life debuted at #8 on PC Data's weekly computer game sales chart for the November 15–21 period, with an average retail price (ARP) of $49. It rose to sixth place the following week, before dropping to position 10 for the week ending December 5. During the December 6–12 period, the game

climbed back to sixth place; by this time, its ARP had dropped to $36. It placed between sixth and eighth on PC Data's weekly charts through the end of December, and its ARP rose back to $45 by the week ending January 2. PC Data declared Half-Life November's sixth-best-selling computer game in the United States, a position it held for the month of December. While its sales were below 100,000 copies in the country by November 30, Half-Life ultimately sold 212,173 units and earned revenues of $8.6 million in the United States by the end of 1998.

During 1999, it was the fifth best-selling computer game in the United States, with sales of 445,123 copies. These sales brought in revenues of $16.6 million, the sixth-highest gross that year for a computer game in the United States. The following year, it was the country's 16th best-selling computer game, selling another 286,593 copies and earning $8.98 million. Half-Life's global sales reached 2.5 million units by July 2001. As of November 16, 2004, eight million copies of the game had been sold, by 2008 9.3 million copies had been sold at retail.

Gearbox Software was slated to release a port to the Dreamcast under contract by Valve and their then publisher Sierra On-Line near the end of 2000. At the ECTS 2000, a build of the game was playable on the publisher's stand, and developers Randy Pitchford and Brian Martel attended to show it off and give interviews to the press. However, despite only being weeks from going gold, it was never commercially released; Sierra announced that Half-Life on Dreamcast was canceled *"due to changing market conditions"* (presumably the first-party abandonment of the failing Dreamcast). The following year Sierra On-Line showed a PlayStation 2 port at E3 2001. This version was released in North America in late October of the same year, followed by a European release just a month later. Around the same time, Half-Life: Blue Shift, which was intended to be a Dreamcast exclusive midquel, was released on PC as the second Half-Life expansion.

Although it has never officially been released, the Dreamcast version was leaked onto the Internet, and was proven fully playable. The leak contains the full versions of Half-Life and Blue Shift, both with an early version of the High Definition Pack (it was from this port that the pack was spawned).

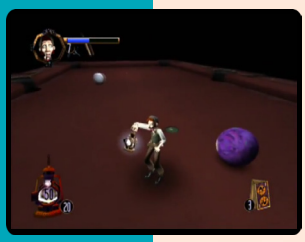
The PlayStation 2 version had a significant overhaul in terms of both character models, weapons, and more advanced and extended levels and general map geometry, incorporated from work on the planned Dreamcast version. Also added in is a head-to-head play and a co-op expansion called Half-Life: Decay that allowed players to play as the two women scientists Dr. Cross and Dr. Green at Black Mesa. Another interesting feature allowed players to use a USB mouse and keyboard, a feature previously unused on the platform.

The PlayStation release received a "Silver" sales award from the ELSPA, indicating sales of at least 100,000 copies in the United Kingdom.

The PC version of Half-Life has a score of 96 out of 100 on Metacritic. Computer Gaming World's Jeff Green said that the game *"is not just one of the best games of the year. It's one of the best games of any year, an instant classic that is miles better than any of its immediate competition, and - in its single-player form - is the best shooter since the original Doom"*. IGN described it as *"a tour de force in game design, the definitive single player game in a first person shooter"*. IGN has also described the game as one of the most influential video games, saying that the history of the FPS genre *"breaks down pretty cleanly into pre-Half-Life and post-Half-Life eras."* GameSpot claimed that it was the *"closest thing to a revolutionary step the genre has ever taken"*. In 2004, GameSpy held a Title Fight, in which readers voted on what they thought was the "greatest game of all time", and Half-Life was the overall winner of the survey.

The Haunted Mansion

6.9



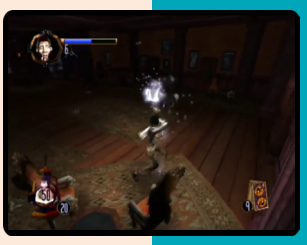
J N P

Developer	High Voltage Software
Publisher	TDK Mediactive, (eu) Take-Two, (jp) Yuke's
Release date	(us) October 14, 2003
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

Based off a combination of the Disneyland attraction and the 2003 movie of the same name, players guide Zeke Holloway through the house of 999 happy haunts in order to solve a mystery, put the spirits to rest, and get out of the house alive.

The game is presented as a 3rd person action adventure. Players are allowed full roam of the mansion, once they collect enough Shriveled Souls inside their Beacon of Souls, a special lantern designed to collect the various lesser ghosts throughout the rooms. Though Zeke handles his quest alone, he is aided by the help of Madame Leota, and six friendly ghosts who will provide hints and items throughout the journey. As Zeke solves puzzles, completes various tasks, and helps rid the house of its evil spirits, these spiritual companions will provide Soul Gems, which amplify the power of the Soul Beacon. Once fully charged, Zeke will have the ability to face the main spirit, Atticus Thorn, for the final showdown.

"mobygames.com"



Hametsu no Mars

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) May 26, 2005
Genre	Action, Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The game is based on the anime series Mars of Destruction. In year 2016, mankind finally reaches the planet Mars. They gather Martian artifacts, intending to bring them to the Earth for further study. But a malfunction causes their spaceship to explode shortly before landing in Japan, and the artifacts fall onto the Earth, releasing a terrible virus that makes people insane. A special unit called AAST is assembled to fight the threat.

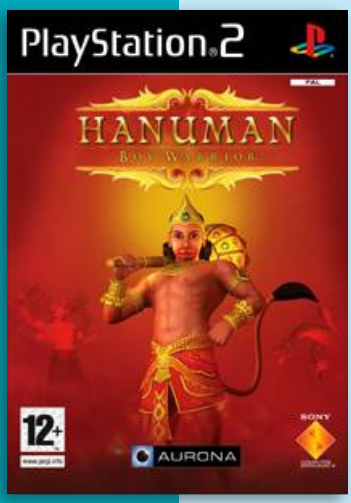
The game is a Japanese-style adventure with action sequences. Players battle against mutants, reacting quickly to the enemies' actions and attacking them with various degree of strength. Between battles players have enough time to talk to their combatants.

6.5

J

Hanuman: Boy Warrior

3.8



Developer	Aurona Technologies
Publisher	SCEE
Release date	(in) March 25, 2009
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Hanuman: Boy Warrior is the first in the Indian PS2 releases. The game is based on Hanuman, a Hindu deity. The game was conceived and made at Aurora's Hyderbad studio in about 9 months period.

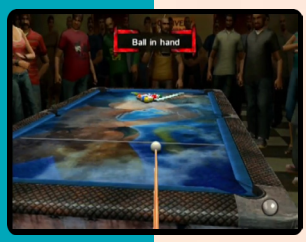
Developed exclusively for PlayStation 2, Hanuman: Boy Warrior was available in the Indian market at a retail price of Rs 499.

The game was criticized by Rajan Zed, president of the Universal Society of Hinduism, for portraying the Hindu deity Hanuman. *"Controlling and manipulating Lord Hanuman with a joystick/button/keyboard/mouse [is] denigration"*, said Zed. *"Lord Hanuman was not meant to be reduced to just a 'character' in a video game to solidify [a] company/product's base in the growing economy of India."* He urged Sony, the publisher of the game, to pull the game. Sony's regional manager however said that Hanuman: Boy Warrior sold beyond their expectations. *"Usually, a good international title would see 3,000-4,000 units sale on the first day. This proved the potential of regional games,"* Bose said.

P

The Hustle: Detroit Streets

4.6



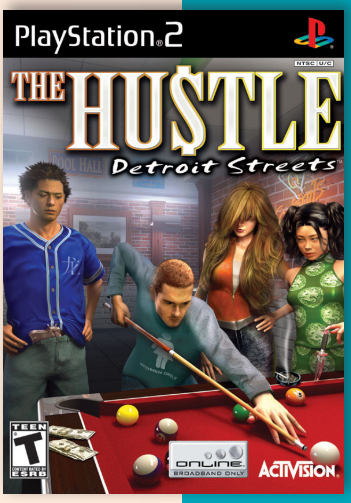
N

Developer	Blade Interactive
Publisher	Activision Value
Release date	(us) April 26, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 (-9) Players

The Hustle: Detroit Streets takes players through the pool halls and clubs of Detroit, as they prove themselves against the masters of the game. Players take on the role of either Jack Stone or Kat Hudson as they make their way to the top of the pool circuit through two different game modes.

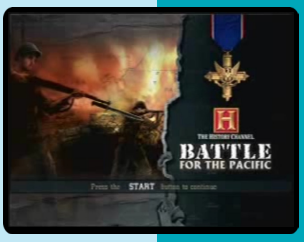
The game features over 180 different pool sharks, 200 variations on the game of pool, trick shots, 9 unique venues, character customization and a several non-player characters.

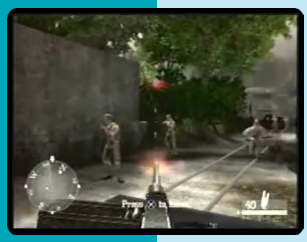
"mobygames.com"



The History Channel: Battle for the Pacific

3.5





N P

Developer	Sand Grain Studios
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) December 4, 2007
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1 (-8) Players

The History Channel: Battle for the Pacific is a historical first-person shooter.

Battle for the Pacific allows players to participate in some of the most famous battles in the Pacific Theater of Operations of World War II, such as The Battle of Iwo Jima and The Battle of Corregidor.

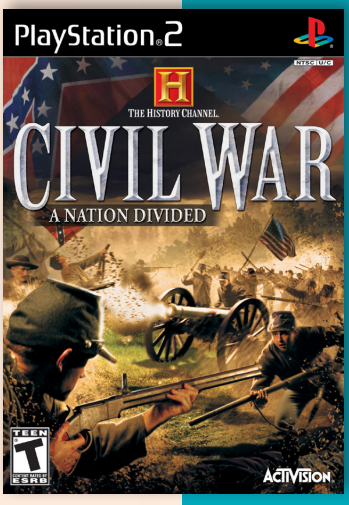
The game features a single player campaign and a multiplayer mode with a decent number of weapons to choose from, ranging from the American Thompson submachine gun and M1 Garand rifle to the Japanese Type 100 submachine gun and Type 38 carbine.

The first person shooter style of gameplay that Battle for the Pacific incorporates allows for gameplay that is similar to the Medal of Honor and Call of Duty series.

The History Channel: Civil War - A Nation Divided

4.8

N



Developer	Cauldron Ltd.
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) November 7, 2006
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

Civil War: A Nation Divided lets players relive the war of the Civil War fighting for both the Union and the Confederate Armies in 12 of the most bloodiest battles in America's history.

As the Union, players fight in Fredericksburg and repel the confederate forces or go to Gettysburg and take on hordes of confederates, Chattanooga, Fort Fisher, in Selma, Alabama and.

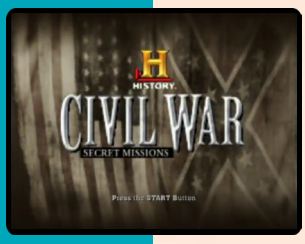
As the Confederates, players hold their ground against the Union army at Bull Run, Shiloh, Chickamauga, Antietam and Cancellorsville and Cold Harbor.

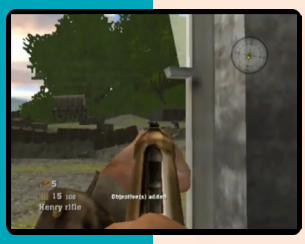
With historical accurate weapons, players go into battle as a different soldier.

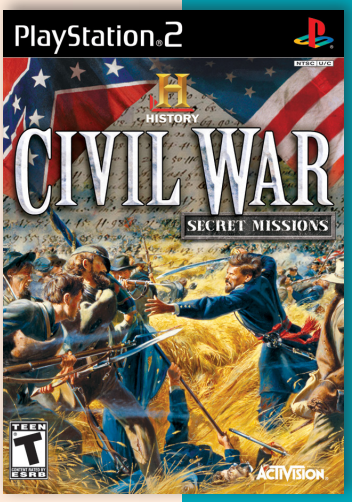
"mobygames.com"

7.0

The History Channel: Civil War - Secret Missions







Developer	Cauldron Ltd.
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) November 4, 2008
Genre	First-person shooter
Mode	1 Player

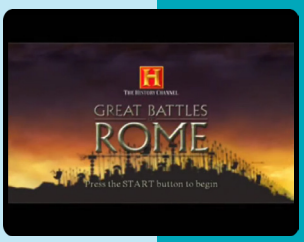
During the Civil War, small and irregular pockets of men were called upon to perform raids, disrupt enemy supply lines and wreak havoc on opposing armies.

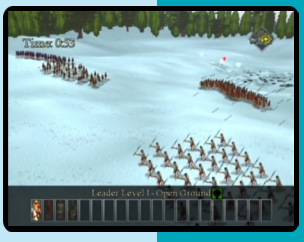
Secret Missions is the sequel to the History Channel sponsored Civil War: A Nation Divided, and like the previous game is also a first person shooter. Unlike the previous game that focused on the major battles, this game instead shifts the action to raids and capturing enemy weapons. Players play as either a solider fighting for the United States or the Confederate States as they use a number of experimental civil war weapons such as the Gatling Gun, or perform a raid on the Baltimore and Ohio with General "Stonewall" Jackson.

"mobygames.com"

The History Channel: Great Battles of Rome

7.1



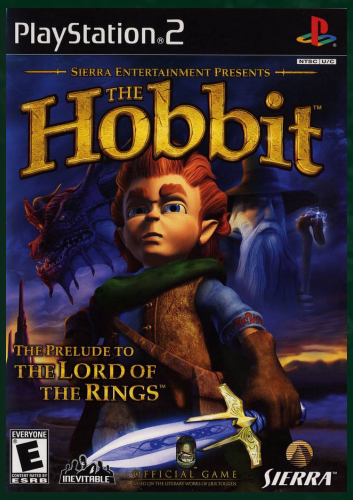


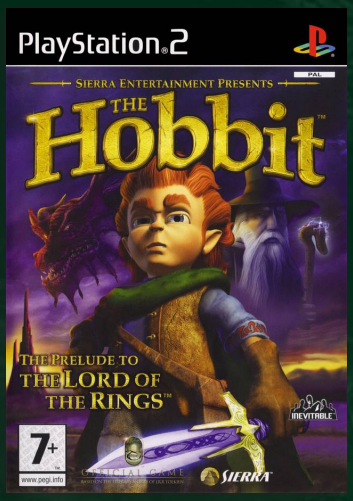
Developer	Slitherine
Publisher	Black Bean Games
Release date	(eu) June 8, 2007
Genre	Real-time strategy
Mode	1 Player

The History Channel: Great Battles of Rome is a real time strategy game set in Roman times. The game allows players to play all the great battles from Roman history. In between missions they can watch (up to 50 minutes of) TV footage from The History Channel's documentaries on Rome. Additionally, the story of Marcus Aurelius is completely voice-acted as well. Gameplay is similar to Slitherine's previous game Legion Arena: Players control their armies in real time on a 3D map. There is no resource gathering or city building, but at the end of every battle they are given points which can be used to purchase new units and upgrade surviving units which they bring along to the next battle.

The game features 14 different campaigns portraying over a 100 different battles.

5.9





JNP

The Hobbit

Developer	Inevitable Entertainment
Publisher	Sierra Entertainment, (jp) Konami
Release date	(us) November 11, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

The Hobbit is a 2003 platform/action-adventure. The game is a licensed adaptation of J. R. R. Tolkien's 1937 novel The Hobbit, and has no relationship with the Peter Jackson-directed Lord of the Rings film trilogy.

Players control Bilbo as he's taken from his safe little hole in the Shire by a band of Dwarves to confront the dragon Smaug, while picking up a glowing sword, an invisibility ring and coins and crystals.

The Hobbit is primarily a platform game, with elements of hack and slash combat and some rudimentary puzzle aspects, played from a third-person perspective. The player controls Bilbo Baggins throughout the game, the majority of which is built around basic platforming; Bilbo can jump, climb ropes and ladders, hang onto ledges, swing on vines etc. Progression through the game is built around "Quests." Every level features multiples quests which must be completed in order to progress to the next level. Many of the levels also feature optional sidequests which do not have to be completed, but which can yield substantial rewards if they are.

Bilbo has three weapons available to him during combat. He begins the game with his walking stick, which can be used in melee combat, and stones, which he can throw. To use stones, he must switch to first-person view. Later in the game, he acquires a dagger, Sting. All three weapons can be powered up by finding magical scrolls scattered throughout the game. These scrolls grant such abilities as increased damage, jump attacks, double and treble combo attacks, and charged attacks. The game also features the use of the One Ring, which can temporarily turn Bilbo invisible, allowing him to avoid certain enemies.

Bilbo's health system is based upon "Courage Points". At the start of the game, he has three health points. For every 1000 Courage Points he collects, he acquires an extra health point. Courage points come in the form of diamonds, with different colors representing different numerical values. For example, a blue diamond equals one courage point, a green diamond equals ten etc. Bilbo's progress in gaining a new health point is shown in his courage meter, which is on screen at all times. For the most part, Courage Points are scattered throughout the levels and awarded for completing quests. Some of the higher value diamonds are hidden off the main path of a level, while the lowest level diamonds (blue) are often used to indicate to the player where they are supposed to be heading.

At the end of each chapter, the player is taken to a vendor, where they can spend the in-game currency, silver pennies. Items available for purchase include stones, healing potions, antidotes, skeleton keys, temporary invincibility potions, additional health points, and the ability to increase the maximum number of stones and health potions which Bilbo can carry.

Pennies, healing potions, antidotes and, often, quest items and weapon upgrades can be found in chests throughout the game. Often,

chests will simply open when Bilbo touches them, but sometimes, the chests are locked, and Bilbo must pick the lock. This involves a timed minigame in which the player must align a pointer or select a specific target. Some chests will have only one minigame to complete, but chests containing more important items will have more, up to a maximum of eight. If Bilbo misses the pointer/target, the timer will jump forward; if he hits a red pointer or target, the minigame will end immediately. Penalties for failing to open a chest include losing health points or being poisoned. If the player has a skeleton key, they can bypass the minigames and open the chest immediately.

The game was first announced on February 25, 2002, when Sierra Entertainment revealed it was being developed as a GameCube exclusive by Inevitable Entertainment. Originally, Sierra's holding company, Vivendi Universal Games, had tapped Sierra to publish a game based on the first book in Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy, The Fellowship of the Ring. As Vivendi owned the rights to video game adaptations of Tolkien's literature, but Electronic Arts owned the rights to video game adaptations of the New Line Cinema film series, the game would have no connection to Peter Jackson's The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring. Ultimately, however, Vivendi released The Fellowship game under their "Black Label Games" banner, and instead, had Sierra begin work on an adaptation of Tolkien's earlier novel, The Hobbit.

After E3, Sierra explained that because the novel is quite short, parts of the story had to be expanded in the game to ensure the narrative was of sufficient length (for example, Bilbo's rescue of the dwarves from the spiders in Mirkwood is much longer and more detailed in the game than in the book), and considerably more combat was added to the story. However, the developers were under strict instructions not to deviate from the basic plot of the novel. Sierra was in constant communication with Tolkien Enterprises, and had also employed several Tolkien scholars to work with the game developers. Tolkien Enterprises had veto rights on any aspects of the game which they felt strayed too far from the tone of Tolkien's novel and his overall legendarium. In the early stages of development, there were plans for players to control Gandalf during the Battle of the Five Armies, but this idea was ultimately abandoned. Also included in early builds for the game were interactive minigames depicting the eagle escape from the Misty Mountains and the barrel escape from Mirkwood. Both of these aspects of the game were dropped due to time constraints, and the minigames were instead replaced with cutscenes.

Mike Ryder; Sierra Entertainment president:
"The Hobbit is one of the pre-eminent fantasy works of all time and is perfectly suited to be the inspiration for a great game. The book provides a tremendous amount of rich material from which we expect to make a fantasy game that lives up to the extremely high expectations of Tolkien's fans worldwide."

Tory Skinner; Vivendi Universal Games producer:

"Because the book was a bit lighter than Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings series, the development team wanted to go with a style that conveyed a little bit of whimsy. That's how we ended up with the very colorful, stylized world in The Hobbit. There are a lot of very interesting settings in The Hobbit, and we wanted to do them justice. By opening up the color palette, and staying away acfrom the drab browns and grays, we were able to create a very distinctive set of levels. No two lev-

els look the same, and they all look great. Once people get to see how much visual variety there is in this game, they are going to love it."

The game was originally announced for a GameCube release, but was later announced for Game Boy Advance, PlayStation 2, Xbox and Windows. Ken Embery, Sierra's executive producer on the game, stated "*the plan all along was to be multiplatform. But we were starting out with GameCube as the lead and were just holding our cards close to our chest before announcing all of our other titles. The PS2 is, of course, the most problematic of all the platforms for developers to deal with and we wanted to make sure that we had solid prototypes and running proof of concept versions before we made it public*". Embery explained the art style of the game was influenced by the Super Mario and Legend of Zelda games, and in that sense, was aimed at a slightly younger audience than the Lord of the Rings films. Tory Skinner, of Vivendi Universal Games, further stated *"The Hobbit was written for a younger audience, so it made sense to create a game that would be enjoyable for younger kids, as well as adults. We looked at the different types of game we could do, and an action-adventure game with a heavy emphasis on the action seemed like the best way to go. We didn't want to make the game inaccessible by loading down gamers with hard-core RPG gameplay."*

The game's score was composed by Rod Abernethy, Dave Adams and Jason Graves, and recorded live with the Northwest Sinfonia in Seattle. The acoustic music was recorded with individual Celtic musicians from Raleigh, North Carolina.

According to lead programmer Andy Thyssen, the game has *"a pretty complex music logic that blends together the level themes. So we have some very different locales, each with its own melody and theme, and we blend in as you approach certain characters, or as you move in and out of combat or hazardous situations. It really adds a lot to the game to push the emotions of the player around like that."*

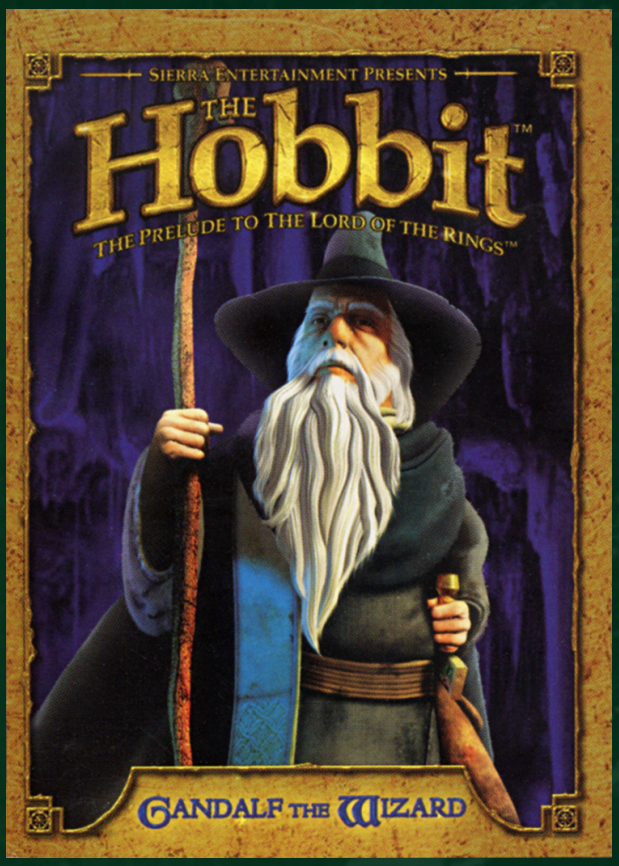
According to Abernathy, *"We began The Hobbit with research: reading Tolkien's literature and immersing ourselves in the world of Bilbo, Gandalf and Gollum. Bilbo's enchanting world needed a music score that was simple, melodic and organic for his adventures through Middle Earth, switching to bold and dramatic for the combat scenes. Reading the literature, one can hear fiddles, wood flutes, bagpipes, guitar, mandolins and bodhráns. And when a fight or battle occurs, one can imagine the pulse of low chugging strings, dramatic percussion and moving brass lines and stabs."*

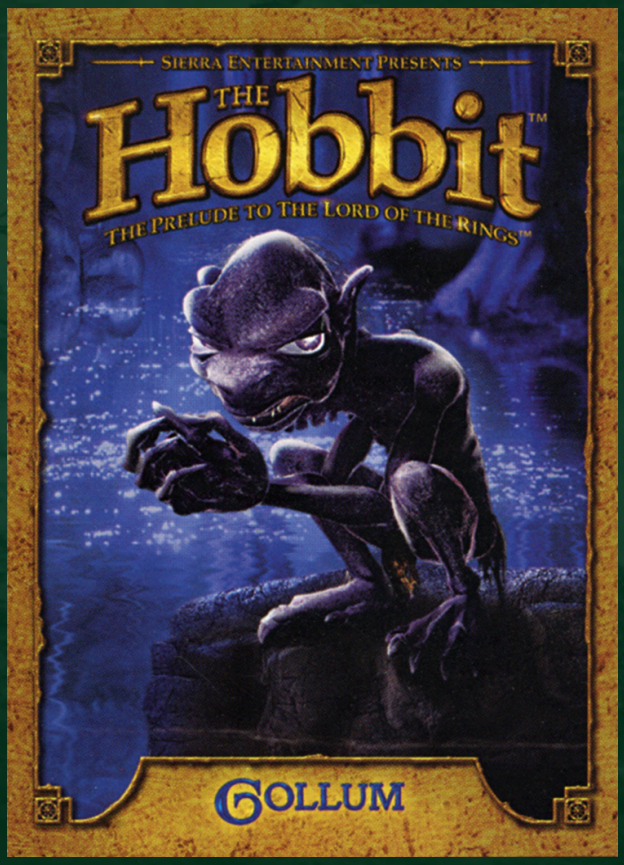
The team was given a budget to create seventy-five minutes of original music, which was to be divided into two categories; "acoustic

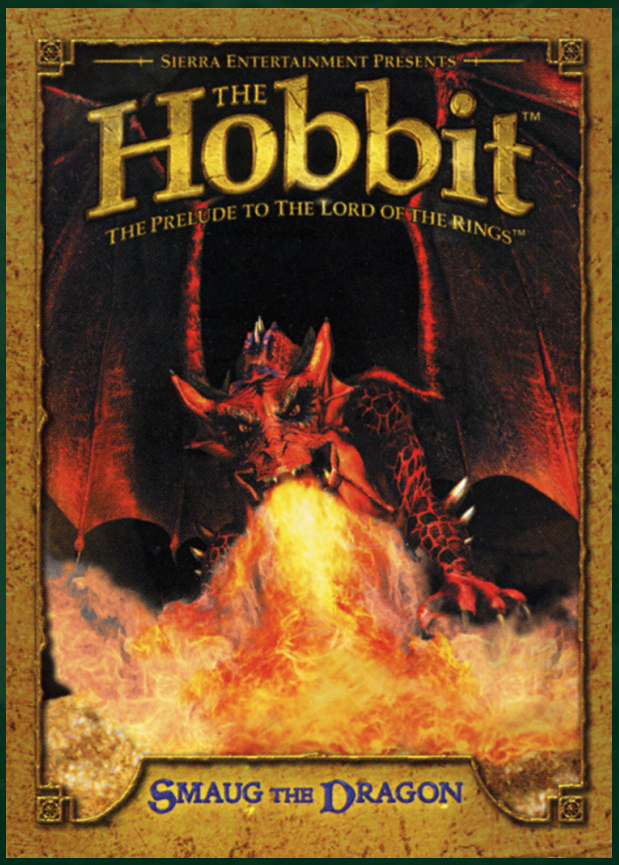
The Hobbit received mixed reviews across all platforms. The PlayStation 2 version holds scores of 64% on GameRankings.

Matt Casamassina scored the console game 7.5 out of 10, feeling the gameplay was too similar to, and not as good as, Zelda games; *"try as this game may to copy Zelda, it lacks the intuitiveness and polish of the franchise, and this drawback is noticeable."* However, he praised the combat and the graphics. He concluded *"it's a well-made adventure game that will absolutely provide a good amount of entertainment and satisfaction for those seeking it. But at the same time the title falls a little short thanks to a general lack of polish and overall difficulty [...] Recommended to hardcore Tolkien fans or to younger players after a fun adventure. That said, the game has a long way to go to take on Link in battle."*

GameSpot's Ryan Davis scored game 6.5 out of 10, writing *"Tolkien fans may enjoy the game's presentation of Middle-earth lore, but The Hobbit tends to rely too heavily on derivative, uninspired gameplay for it to stand up on its own."* He praised the game's closeness to the novel, but felt the gameplay featured nothing original.







Hamster Heroes

4.4

P

Developer	Data Design Interactive
Publisher	Metro3D
Release date	(eu) July 15, 2005
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

Hamster Heroes is an action game based around controlling a hamster encapsulated in a ball rolling through environments similar to the concept of the Super Monkey Ball games. It builds on the concept of the earlier Habitrail Hamster Ball and with very similar mechanics. The player steers a hamster through environments floating in the sky with small ledges and platforms to reach the exit without falling off.

"mobygames.com"

Hana to Otome ni Shukufuku o: Harukaze no Okurimono

9.0

J N P

Developer	Alchemist
Publisher	Alchemist
Release date	(jp) July 8, 2010
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

In this visual novel, players start off as Tsukioka Akira. He's a normal guy living with his sick twin sister. She can't go to school and has been sick for too long so she may have to repeat the year, or drop out of school. So his parents decide to send him, the splitting image of his sister, over to the all-girls prestigious school to go undercover as his sister.

"psxdatacenter.com"

Hanafuda

7.5

J

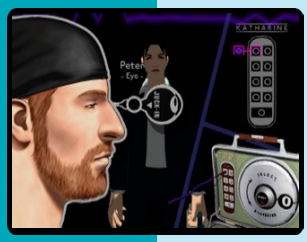
Developer	Success
Publisher	Success
Release date	(jp) May 13, 2004
Genre	Board
Mode	1 Player

This SuperLite game is based around Japanese cards. Players can play against the computer in a free mode, where they select from three different rule sets, "Koi Koi," "Oichokabu" and "Hana Awase." Also available is a noational mode in which players select a character from one of twelve regions throughout Japan and take on a rival in another region using "Koi Koi" rules.

"ign.com"

Hana to Taiyou to Ame to

8.0



Developer	Grasshopper Manufacture
Publisher	Victor Interactive Software
Release date	(jp) May 2, 2001
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Flower Sun and Rain: Murder and Mystery in Paradise is an adventure game from Suda51, known as the lead designer of cult games Killer 7 and No More Heroes.

In the game players take the role of Sumio Mondo, a "searcher" whose job is to search for people's missing items. After failing to defuse a bomb set on an aeroplane, Sumio begins to relive the same day over and over again, and the same disaster continuously takes place.

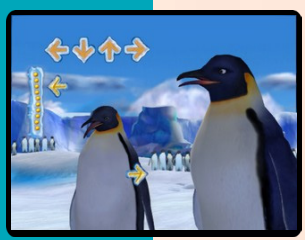
The game is played by exploring 3D environments and searching for places, people and objects to examine. Once Sumio discovers a place he can examine, he uses his partner, "Catherine" — a briefcase that can jack into anything and discover secrets. After finding the correct jack to hook up to the object with, Sumio must input a code to unlock the secret and solve the puzzle.

"mobygames.com"

J

Happy Feet

4.9



N P

Developer	Artificial Mind and Movement
Publisher	Warner Bros. Interactive, (au) Midway
Release date	(us) November 14, 2006
Genre	Action, Music
Mode	1-2 Players

Happy Feet is an action-adventure game based on the movie of the same name. Elijah Wood, Brittany Murphy, Dee Bradley Baker, Carlos Alazraqui, Jeff Garcia, and Johnny A. Sanchez all reprise their voice roles from the film.

The game feature 3 different modes: a dancing mode which simulates Dance Dance Revolution with the player pushing the button in response to arrows on the screen, a fishing mode in which the player collects pebbles and shrimp as well as air bubbles in order to breathe, and a belly-sledding mode where the player sleds and collects the number of fish needed, sleds to beat a given time or races another character down the hill.

The game also features each of these modes for two players.

Hanabi Hyakkei

7.0

J

Developer	Nippon Amuse
Publisher	Nippon Amuse
Release date	(jp) October 30, 2003
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

Hanabi Hyakkei is a pachi-slot simulation that features simulation of the slot machine of the same name. In addition to standard single-player pachislo play, the game also features a competitive battle mode against the computer (called Battleslot), a free play mode, and a machine spec mode that lets players see all the machine insides. There is also an Omake mode that provides a distraction from the standard pachislo action.

Hanabi Shokunin Ninarou 2

Developer	Magical Company (Mahou)
Publisher	Magical Company (Mahou)
Release date	(jp) June 26, 2003
Genre	Strategy, Simulation
Mode	1 Player

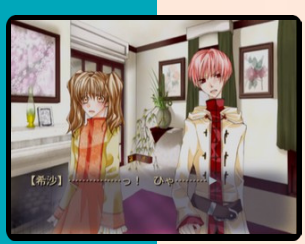
Hanabi Shokunin ninarou 2 is a fireworks simulator. The game features a wide assortment of fireworks to design, view, edit and experience on the PS2. Common fireworks such as radial explosions and spherical blasts are fairly easy to create but elaborate fireworks may also be crafted which show complete figures, scenes and other elaborate sky theatre.

"psxdatacenter.com"

J

Hanakisou

4.6



J

Developer	Hacca-Works
Publisher	Prototype
Release date	(jp) July 6, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Hana Ki Sou is a doujin Boys Love Game.In the game, Kuroto was born to destroy the world; and so Hanashiro was born to save it. The only way Hanashiro can do that is by killing Kuroto. However, they one day meet and become very close, and Hanashiro becomes completely unwilling to fulfill his duty as the Savior. With conflict rising among the nations, the fate of the world has become unclear.

"tvtropes.org"

Hanayoi Romanesque: Ai to Kanashimi

Developer	Marvelous Entertainment
Publisher	Marvelous
Release date	(jp) May 29, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The player character, Kirihara Tamami, is a teacher at the historical Gekka Academy, where various male members of the Houshou family reside as staff and students. This family has the 'Logos' curse on them, and Tamami is able to see this curse. Gameplay revolves around Tamami taking various forms of the curse and hopefully releasing them in the correct way to free the guys from it.

J

6.6

Hanjuku Eiyuu 4: 7-Jin no Hanjuku Eiyuu

J

Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) May 26, 2005
Genre	Real-time strategy
Mode	1 Player

In this game, Lord Almamoon discovers that he has been tricked into marrying the princess of the Katri Kingdom, who is considered to be the ugliest woman in the world. The game contains two types of battles: 100 on 100 battle using a mix of 2D and 3D, and three-on-three party-based Egg Monster vs. Egg Monster battles.

Hanjuku Eiyuu Tai 3D

8.1

Developer	Square Enix
Publisher	Square Enix
Release date	(jp) June 26, 2003
Genre	Strategy
Mode	1 Player

Hanjuku Hero Tai 3D is the first title in the Hanjuku Hero series to be in 3D. Lord Almamoon and his kingdom are sucked into an alternate 3-dimensional world and must fight off polygonal Egg Monsters.

A limited edition of the game was released alongside the standard edition, and included merchandise such as playing cards, an egg monster sheet, and a sketchbook.

J

6.8

Hannspree Ten Kate Honda SBK

Developer	Milestone S.r.l
Publisher	Black Bean Games, (us) Valcon Games, SCEA
Release date	(eu) May 18, 2007
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

SBK-07: Superbike World Championship is the official game based on the Superbike World Championship.

All the real elements are in the game, including official tracks, riders, and sessions. The player may take part in quick races, practice session, time attacks, full championships, multiplayer matches, or challenges.

N P

Hansel & Gretel

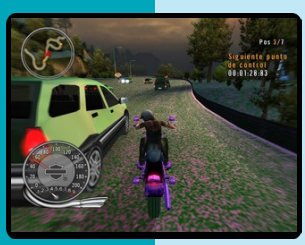
Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) November 24, 2006
Genre	Mini-games
Mode	1 Player

Hansel & Gretel is another of the Phoenix games that features a mix between watching a cartoon and a collection of sliding puzzles, jigsaw puzzles and colouring images. This time the story is based on the Brothers Grimm classic fairy tale of. Hansel and Gretel are a young brother and sister threatened by a cannibalistic witch living deep in the forest in a house constructed of cake and confectionery.

P

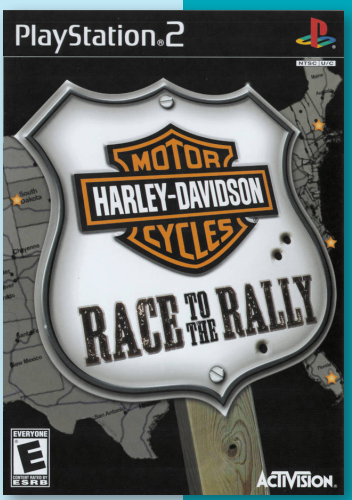
3.3

Harley-Davidson Motorcycles: Race to the Rally



Developer	FUN Labs
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) November 27, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

The game is a motorcycle racing game that involves racing AI opponents across tracks coast to coast in America. There are 20 motorcycles licensed and designed after real Harley-Davidson's from Softail, Dyna, Touring, Sportster and others. The gameplay involves dodging traffic, obstacles and other drivers while gaining points for making jumps, kicking opponents off and wining races.



N P

Happiness! De-Lucks

8.0

Developer	Marvelous Entertainment
Publisher	Marvelous
Release date	(jp) January 25, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Happiness! centers around Yuma Kohinata, a high school student attending Mizuhosaka Academy's regular section of the school, and his close friends Jun Watarase and Hachisuke Takamizo. The other section of the school, aptly named the magic section, was founded in order to train mages in the art of using magic. After a gas explosion at the magic section all the mages in training to transfer to the normal section for the time being.

J

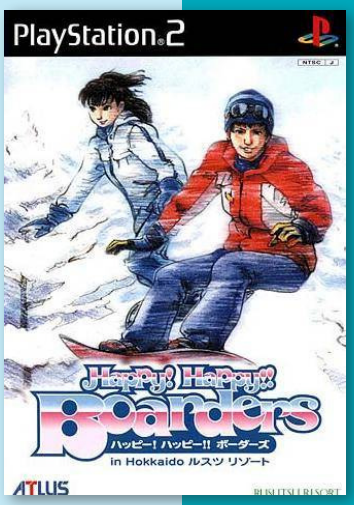
Happy! Happy!! Boarders in Hokkaido

7.8

J

Developer	Racjin
Publisher	Atlus
Release date	(jp) December 14, 2000
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 Player

In Happy! Happy!! Boarders players try snowboarding in the immense snow-packed environments of Japan's Hokkaido Mountains. Featuring more than 30 varied courses and 20 different kinds of stunts, the game mixes traditional downhill racing and trick play with a romantic adventure mode, challenging time trials, and a myriad of menu extras like alternate costumes, and more.



Harukaze P.S.: Plus Situation

Developer	Circus
Publisher	Kadokawa Shoten
Release date	(jp) May 29, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Harukaze: Plus Situation CD game is a ported bonus game for D.C. II P.S.: Da Capo II Plus Situation DX Pack. This game comes on a separate disc as a part of this pack and not anywhere else.

The game is an arc in the story. The game promoted three of the former supporting characters Maya Sawai, Akane Hanasaki, and Mayuki Kosaka to become obtainable heroines, along with the introduction of three original heroines.

J

5.2

Happy Breeding: Cheerful Party

J

Developer	Purple Software
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) February 27, 2003
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Happy Breeding (DreamCast), also known as Happy Breeding: Cheerful Party on PS2, is a non-adult console port of a Happy Breeding adult visual novel for Windows. While the original game had voice-acting, the console ports changed voice-actresses for some of the heroines.

The story revolves around Takashi, who just started living on his own recently. One day, he finds a strange looking girl in his house and ends up living together, seeing how the house was too big for one person and all. It doesn't go too long before he finds himself living together with yet another girl, and yet another. All the girls are not entirely human and display animal traits such as dog's ears, cat's tails, and the likes. Thus his life on his own soon turns out more lively than he expected after leaving his parents.

The game is a typical visual novel with basic features of the genre, static characters which only vary in poses, occasional animations such as rain effect, sound effect to indicate what is happening on the scene instead of seeing actual animations, fast-forward option during dialogues, and full voice-acting, but only for main heroines.

The First Print Limited Edition boxed release also contains a Special 32 pages artbook.

"mobygames.com"

Limited Edition

6.8

Hasbro Family Game Night

N P

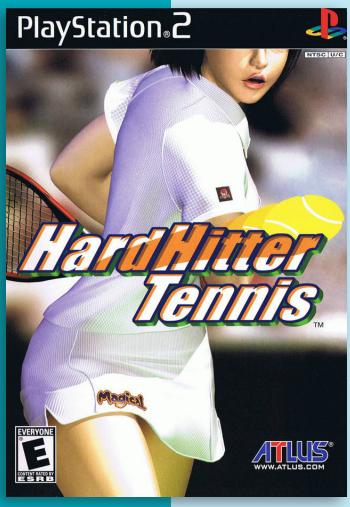
Developer	EA Bright Light
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) November 11, 2008
Genre	Board
Mode	1-4 Players

Hasbro Family Game Night is a mini-game collection consisting of six Hasbro board games - Battleship, Boggle, Connect Four, Sorry!, Sorry! Sliders and Yahtzee. The games all have traditional versions as well as "advanced" variants exclusive to the Family Game Night package. The mini-game collection is hosted by Mr. Potato Head.

The game was also released on Xbox 360 Live Arcade on March 18, 2009 as a free hub application.

Hard Hitter Tennis

6.8



Developer	Magical Company (Mahou)
Publisher	Magical Company, (eu) Midas, (us) Atlus
Release date	(jp) June 28, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Magical Sports: Hard Hitter, also known as Centre Court: Hardhitters, is a tennis game that can be played by up to four players.

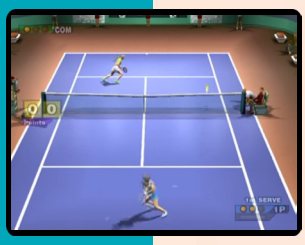
The game has three modes of play: Training, Arcade and Exhibition. Four kinds of tennis court are represented, grass, clay, lawn and indoor. The game has save/load functions, and a create-a-player function.

"mobygames.com"

J N P

Hard Hitter 2

4.2

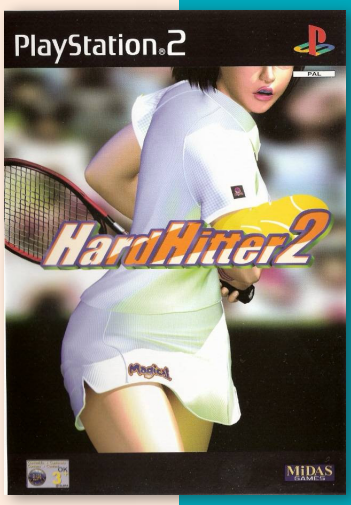


J P

Developer	Magical Company (Mahou)
Publisher	Magical Company, (eu) Midas, (ko) Eolith
Release date	(jp) February 7, 2002
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Hard Hitter Tennis challenges players to become the best in the world. They can choose one of 14 athletes or make their own, and grow the character's stats over the course of a year. Playing well during the game will increase the mentality meter, giving the player a better chance of making tough shots. The mentality meter can also be expended to make a shot that will be difficult to hit back.

"mobygames.com"



Hatsukoi: First Kiss

8.0

Developer	Princess Soft
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) June 30, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Hatsukoi: First Kiss revolves around the high-school student, Minoru Hatsushima. Following day-to-day lives of the students, Minoru's wish to find himself a girlfriend stars when a couple of his friends start to date each other. With many cute girls in his class and senior classes, he will find himself in a situation where his first love can be any of those girls.

"mobygames.com"

J

4.5

Hard Rock Casino

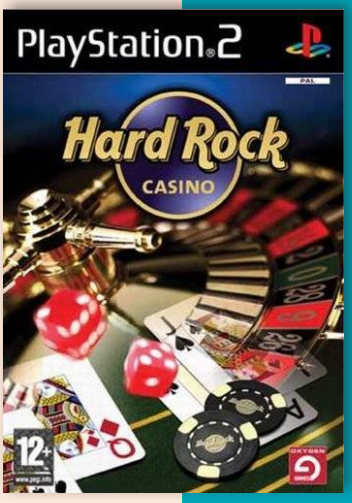
N P

Developer	Farsight Studios
Publisher	Oxygen Interactive, (us) Crave
Release date	(us) November 27, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

Hard Rock Casino is a gambling game based on the Hard Rock Casino brand.

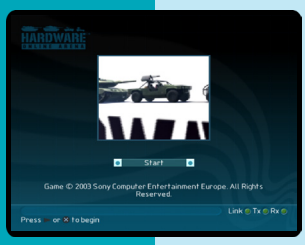
The game feature four casinos and 22 casino games, including slot machines, poker, blackjack, roulette, craps, baccarat, pai gow, Let It Ride and Casino War. The player is given body type and clothing options to create a customized player character. The game includes a story mode in which the player tries to win enough money to gamble at high roller casinos. To progress through the story mode, the player must play and win the various gambling games to advance from one casino to the next casino.

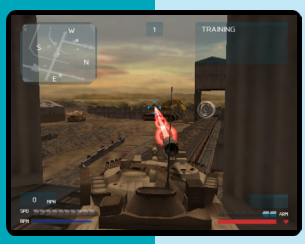
The game received generally unfavorable reviews, according to Metacritic. Reviewers criticized the game for their simple gambling games and repetitive gameplay, with Rob Fahey of Eurogamer stating that none of the games were *"particularly fun to play."* Reviewers noted that some of the games were played by pushing a single button. Reviewers also criticized the gambling games' graphical user interface, with some comparing it to a flash game.



6.2

Hardware: Online Arena





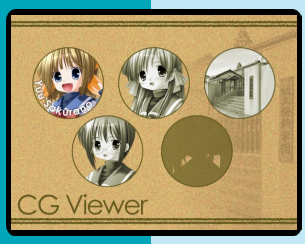
P

Developer	SCEE
Publisher	SCEA, (ko) SCE Korea
Release date	(eu) November 7, 2003
Genre	Action, Shooter
Mode	1 (-16) Players

Hardware: Online Arena is an online multiplayer game that focuses on vehicular destruction using varying means such as missiles, lasers and machine guns. The game was released for PlayStation 2 with the launch of online play for the console and was thus arguably the first online game for PS2. The game was not a huge commercial success, selling very little. To boost sales, the game was added onto the network access disk that came with the purchase of the network adaptor and, as a result, the game was one of the three most popular games played online during 2005, having over 200 users on at any one time.

Haru no Ashioto: Step of Spring

8.0



J N P

Developer	Alchemist
Publisher	Alchemist
Release date	(jp) April 6, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Haru no Ashioto for PlayStation 2 is a port from the Windows game with the same name, with removed adult content and additional subtitle Step of Spring not present in the original version. The story revolves around a broken-hearted young man, Tatsuki Sakurano, who was recently dumped by his girlfriend. After returning to his hometown from Tokyo, due to one of the teachers being hospitalized, he takes a position as a substitute teacher in a local high-school. He has a teacher license for social studies. The story is about growing up and falling in love, as it usually is in interactive visual novels.

The game features two gameplay modes: the regular story mode and omakase mode. The difference in gameplay modes is that one lets the player decide on how to handle certain situations where player choices affect the story, while the other provides a fully linear story experience. Extras section, which can be accessed via main menu, contains unlockable CG gallery of heroines and in-game movies as well as music player which is fully unlocked by default.

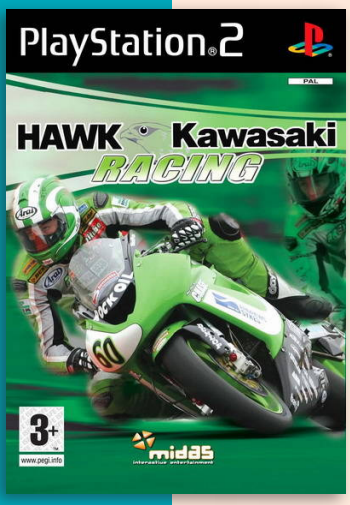
The in-game characters blink their eyes and open mouth while talking and features full voice-acting for non-player characters.

"mobygames.com"

PacPac Pack

Hawk Kawasaki Racing

6.8



Developer	Infusion Games
Publisher	Midas Interactive Entertainment
Release date	(eu) October 11, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

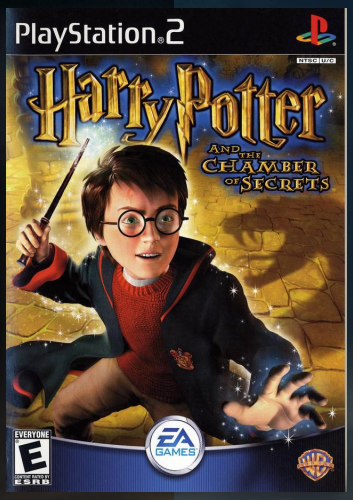
Hawk Superbike Racing was developed in close association with the Hawk Racing team, and with additional license support of such leading manufacturers as Arai, Renthal and Dunlop tyres.

The game feature 14 circuits in both normal and reversed modes. Players can race Superbikes and Super-Sidecars in 'Production' and 'Race Tuned' classes.

P

7.1

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets



JNP

Developer	EA Games
Publisher	EA Games, (eu) EA, (jp) Electronic Arts Victor
Release date	(us) November 14, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets is an action-adventure game based on J.K. Rowling's novel and the film of the same name.

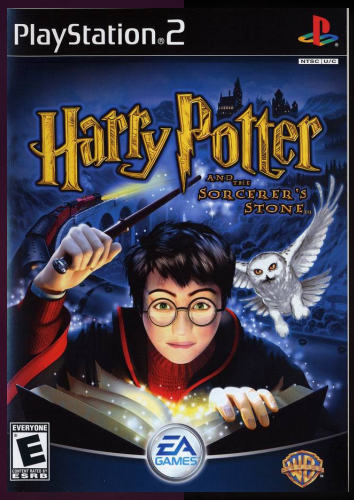
The game's core gameplay is straightforward. Taking control of Harry, the player explores Hogwarts castle and grounds. Throughout the course of the game, the player will encounter events that tie into the storyline of the second book. Filling the gaps between these events are various classes, where the player will learn how to fly a broomstick and learn new spells for combating bosses, among other things. Each new spell is accompanied by a challenge, which the player must get through in a certain amount of time to complete that class period. During the later parts of the game, the player will face challenges which are not time-limited and are not related to learning spells. These challenges are all based on events from the book, for example, travelling into the Forbidden Forest and gathering ingredients for a potion Hermione is making.

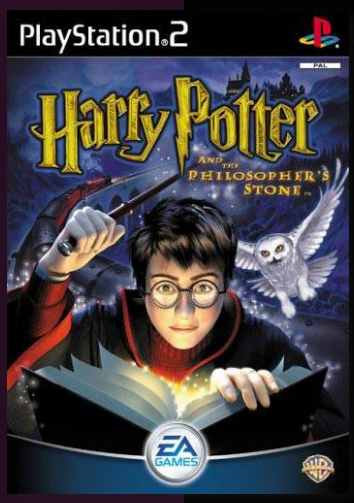
There are also slight differences between the three console versions of the game. The GameCube, PlayStation 2 and Xbox versions of the game allow the player to access a broom and enter free-flight mode. While the PlayStation 2 version allows the player to land anywhere they want, in the Xbox and GameCube version the landing zones are limited. In the GameCube version, there is an exclusive feature involving GC-GBA connectivity that allows a secret room to be opened in the GC version when connected with the GBA version of the game.

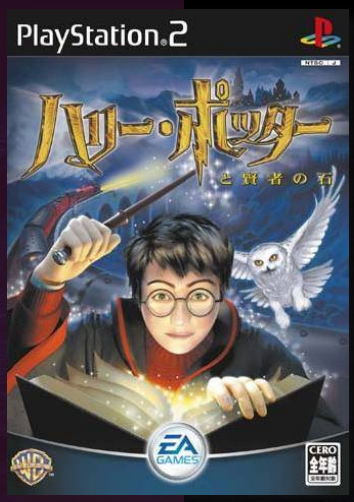
The game received mostly positive reviews. By July 2006, the PlayStation 2 version of Chamber of Secrets had sold 700,000 copies and earned $28 million in the United States. Next Generation ranked it as the 89th highest-selling game launched for the PlayStation 2, Xbox or GameCube between January 2000 and July 2006 in that country. Combined console sales of the Harry Potter line reached 3 million units in the United States by July 2006.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

5.6







J N P

Developer	Warthog
Publisher	EA Games, (jp) Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) December 9, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, known as Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone in the United States, is an action-adventure with platform elements. It is based on the novel and the film adaptation of the same name. Philosopher's Stone was initially developed for the Windows, PlayStation, Game Boy Color, Game Boy Advance and OS X in November 2001, and was re-made two years later for the GameCube, PlayStation 2 and Xbox in December 2003.

The story follows protagonist Harry Potter, who discovers he is a wizard, and is sent to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry where he makes friends and receives magical training, and along with his friends stop Lord Voldemort from returning to power.

The sixth generation console video games was developed by Warthog Games and set out to fix some of the problems encountered in the previous game such as loading time. Its gameplay differed greatly from the other versions, followed the film far more closely than the other games, and was criticised for taking all the spells and world map from the Chamber of Secrets version of the game.

The voice actors differs in the next generation version with several of the younger cast members being replaced by the actors and Quirrell. So was Dale, too, with Stephen Fry having taken his place, who played them in later adaptations. For instance, Tom Attenborough replaces Joe Sowerbutts as Harry, whilst Harper Marshall takes on the role of Hermione. Actor David de Keyser is also replaced as Professors Dumbledore

The PlayStation 2, Gamecube, and Xbox versions of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone received mixed reviews from critics. The game was compared to the Chamber of Secrets game with IGN saying the game was *"like the digital equivalent of a Ron Weasley hand-me-down."* Worth Playing said the voice acting was *"probably the game's best aural aspect"*, as the actors *"deliver their lines in a believable and fitting style."*

7.0

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

JNP

Developer	EA Games
Publisher	EA Games
Release date	(eu) May 29, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 (-4) Players

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban is an action-adventure platformer based on the third novel in the Harry Potter series and the film of the same name.

Whilst the game has a similar plot, the game has a different focus, with events sometimes out of order, simplified, or simply removed. The game also features events that never take place in the novel or the film.

The games follows Harry Potter along with Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger as they return to Hogwarts school. Prisoner Sirius Black has escaped the wizard prison Azkaban, and is supposedly ready to attack Harry in Hogwarts.

The game begins on the Hogwarts Express, ignoring the events at Harry's home. Upon reaching Hogwarts, the trio follow the events of the novel, and learn magic by attending classes.

The spells that can be learned include carpe retractum, a spell that allows an object to be pulled towards the caster, or the caster be pulled towards the object; Steleus, a spell that causes sneezing and expecto patronum, a spell to defect against dementors.

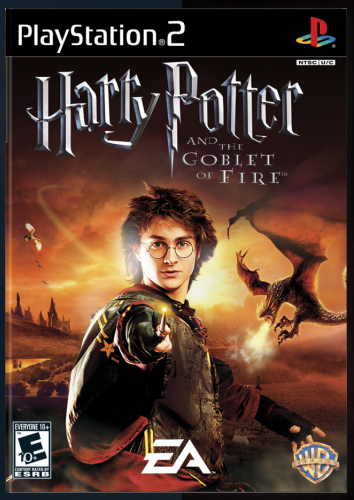
In addition to playing as Harry, the game also allows the player to control Hermione and Ron, as well as fly Buckbeak, and control Harry's pet owl, Hedwig.

Similar to in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, different versions of this game were produced for the different platforms. The PlayStation 2 version features mini games compatible with the EyeToy.

The game received favorable reviews, according to Metacritic, with the PlayStation 2 version receiving the best scores, at 70%. Matt Casamassina gave the game a 6.2 rating out of 10, saying *"In some cases, it's prettier than any other "Boy Wizard"* game. In some cases, it's smarter. The game does deliver a good amount of compelling story and play.

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

6.8



Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) November 8, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1-2 Players

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire is an action-adventure game based on the Harry Potter film, which in turn is based on J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, the fourth novel in the Harry Potter series. The game was released in 2005 to coincide with the release of the film.

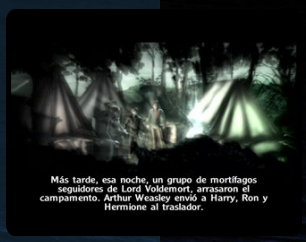
The game follows the events and characters of novel, and film, with the player controlling Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, and Ron Weasley. The game uses an improved version of the group casting mechanic found in the Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. Improved graphics mean the characters themselves more closely resemble their film counterparts than in previous games. Gameplay in the Goblet of Fire is much more action-oriented, which is a change from the puzzle and adventure elements found in previous games of the series.

The game is split up into particular levels, rather than freeroaming around Hogwarts castle like in earlier games. Levels are played from parts of the novel the game is based on, with levels ranging from the Quiddich World cup, the Prefect's bathroom, and the Herbology greenhouses; which can be entered from the in game "pensive". The game also features modes outside of combat, including broomstick flying, and underwater swimming.

In a first for the series, players can play the game with friends, and can combine their magic and spells to make them more powerful. Players can also capture moving beans using Accio and increase their power with collectors, creature, and character cards. The game is divided into several non-consecutive levels, some of which are locked at the beginning of the game until the player collects enough Triwizard Shields to unlock it.

Just like the previous Harry Potter game titles, Goblet of Fire has received "mixed" reviews, according to Metacritic.

The game received a "Platinum" sales award from the ELSPA, indicating sales of at least 300,000 copies in the United Kingdom.



6.1

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

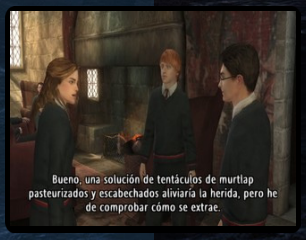
Developer	EA Games
Publisher	EA Games
Release date	(us) June 25, 2007
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix is based on the fifth installment of the Harry Potter series and the film of the same name.

The theme of the game is to explore Hogwarts and follow the story from the book and movie. EA encouraged fan participation in the development of this game, and worked with a fan council. The game returns to the sandbox style of the first three games rather than the action-oriented Goblet of Fire. Similar to any sandbox, Hogwarts is fully explorable most of the time, and there are "discovery points" that provide rewards to the player, which can be activated by completing side missions. Furthermore, there are battles between groups of students.

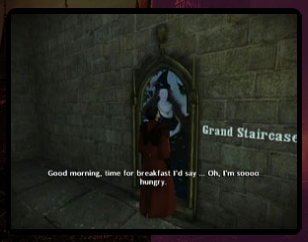
The game presents the player with a large part of the Harry Potter universe, combining the movie blueprints, J.K. Rowling's drawings and books' descriptions to recreate known places, including the Ministry of Magic, Grimmauld Place and Little Whinging. As well as the main missions, and as part of the new sandbox style of playing, players can explore Hogwarts and interact with objects, using magical spells to earn Discovery points. One can duel Slytherins in the Entrance Courtyard, Paved Courtyard, and specific floor corridors. One can also duel throughout the story. Most of them are played as Harry. Nevertheless, near the end, one will play as Sirius Black and Dumbledore in different duels. Earning Discovery points increases the power of the owned spells, and earns player bonuses, such as behind-the-scenes videos and trophies, which can be viewed in the Room of Rewards. Items in the room such as trophies can also be unlocked by taking part in the various mini games, such as Exploding Snap, Wizard chess and Gobstones. There are various missions to complete which follow the storyline of the film, such as the recruiting of Dumbledore's Army members, or creating havoc when Umbridge is made Headmistress.

The game received "mixed or average" reviews according to Metacritic.

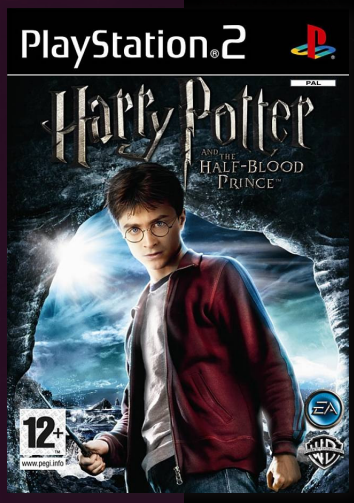


Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

6.3



Developer	EA Bright Light
Publisher	EA Games
Release date	(us) June 30, 2009
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1-2 Players



Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince is based on the film of the same name. The game was released for the Windows, Nintendo DS, Wii, PS2, PS3, PSP, Xbox 360, and mobile platforms.

Half-Blood Prince features the exploration of Hogwarts and casting spells on objects around the school, similar to its predecessor, Order of the Phoenix. The game also includes multiplayer games, classes, different times of day, Quidditch, Wizard Duels and Potion making. The Marauder's Map is included in the game, with progress opening other parts of the school. Harry can also call Nearly Headless Nick to show him around the school. Harry is the main playable character in the game, but Ron and Ginny are also available in two levels. The first has Ron concentrate on following Harry after taking a Love Potion (if he doesn't follow Harry, the mission fails). The second has Ginny fill in for Harry for Quidditch when he gets detention and play against the rival Seeker, Cho Chang.

As Dumbledore mentions, the Duelling Club begins. Harry is allowed to duel freely with students and learn spells from them. The Gryffindor Duelling Club is located in the Great Hall, while the other Houses' are in other places, including the Paved Courtyard, Training Ground, and Transfiguration Courtyard.

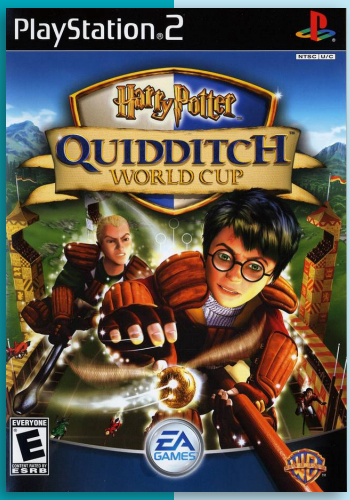
As Harry attends Potions class, mixing ingredients to make potions is done with the analogue stick. Harry must also join the Potions Club, which is in the Herbology classroom. Potions ingredients surround the cauldron on the workbench, and through visual symbols that pop up on the screen, the instructions must be followed to complete the potion.

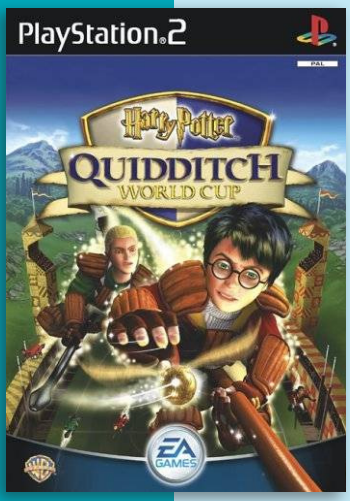
The school grounds are nearly identical to the previous installment. Some new areas are added, including the entrance to Hogwarts. Other areas previously accessible are now inaccessible due to the new security of Hogwarts added by the Aurors

The game received "mixed or average" reviews according to Metacritic.

6.8

Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup





J N P

Developer	Magic Pockets
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Release date	(us) October 28, 2003
Genre	Sports, Action
Mode	1-2 Players

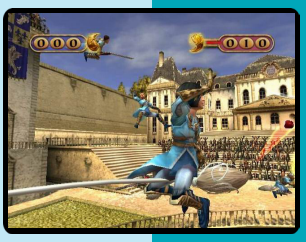
Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup is a 2003 sports action game that features the fictional sport of Quidditch from J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter franchise, using the likeness from the films. The user plays in the Hogwarts Quidditch Cup competition.

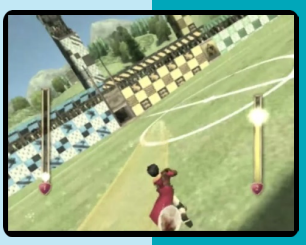
Hogwarts House team rosters are based on Harry's third year (Prisoner of Azkaban). Other House team and national team members not named in the books are named in this game, and their names are also listed on Chocolate Frog cards in the Half-Blood Prince video game.

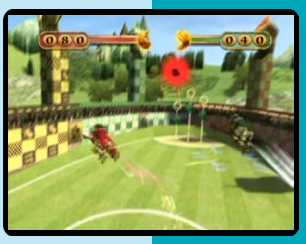
As in the first three books, Lee Jordan returns as play-by-play commentator for the House Quidditch Cup matches, but unique to this game, Harry and Ron's dorm-mate Seamus Finnegan joins as color commentator. Meanwhile, Ludo Bagman returns as play-by-play commentator for international matches, with a set of color commentators. Other characters make appearances in the stands and elsewhere, such as Hermione Granger, Ron Weasley, Rolanda Hooch and Albus Dumbledore.

The game starts with players selecting which of the four Hogwarts school teams they wishes to play for. Following some tutorial events, they are launched into the competition for the Hogwarts Cup against the other three teams. As the player wins games and completes specific challenges (such as "score 120 points in one game") they collect Quidditch cards which unlock special combo moves. Once a player has won the school championship, they can go on to play as one of nine international teams competing for the Quidditch World Cup each with it's own style and special combo moves. After winning the cup once, there are still more cards to be collected by playing and winning as different teams.

Because the game is designed for younger audiences, Quidditch World Cup lacks most of the advanced features one could expect in an EA sports game (league play, team management, etc...). It also lacks any multiplayer options other than two players.

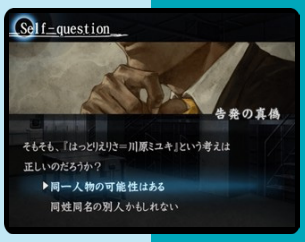






Hayarigami: Keishichou Kaii Jiken File

2.5



J

Developer	Nippon Ichi Software
Publisher	Nippon Ichi Software
Release date	(jp) August 5, 2004
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

Hayarigami - Keishityou Kaii Jiken File is a detective adventure based on urban legends. Players can either investigate cases through a scientific method or through an occultism method. These two paths lead them to different clues and different endings, so to learn the full story behind the often deadly cases, players need complete the game at least twice.

Hayarigami Revenge: Keishichou Kaii Jiken File

2.6

J

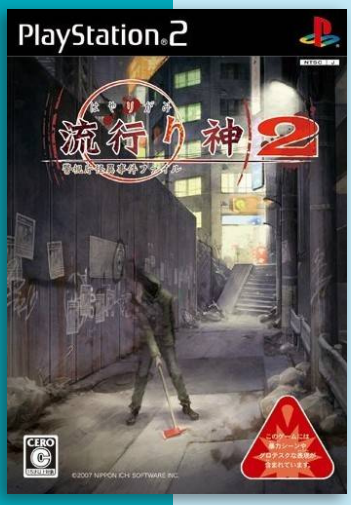
Developer	Nippon Ichi Software
Publisher	Nippon Ichi Software
Release date	(jp) July 14, 2005
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

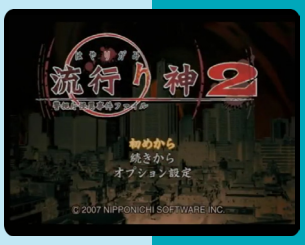
The storyline places players in the role of a detective out to collect clues to solve a mystery. The game feature four different game styles; The Detective Logic system, the Courage Point system, the Self Question system and the Data Base system.

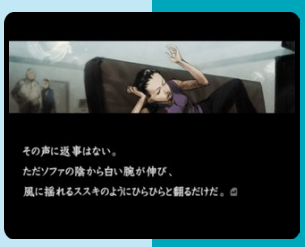
The game was released with a bonus audio CD.

Hayarigami 2: Keishichou Kaii Jiken File

5.0







J

Developer	Nippon Ichi Software
Publisher	Nippon Ichi Software
Release date	(jp) November 15, 2007
Genre	Adventure
Mode	1 Player

In this game, players need to verify the truths behind urban legends and the bloody, often impossible crimes related to them. Players follow the scientific route or the occult route and come across all the different clues littered on their path. By choosing the investigation methods, they will come to different endings.

"psxdatacenter.com"

9.0

Premium Box

J

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de: Hachiyoushou

Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) April 1, 2005
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Hachiyoushou is a remake of the first game, released on PlayStation. It was repackaged to tie into the eponymous anime series adaptation's broadcast.

The player take the role of high school student, Akane Motomiya. On the first day of a new school term her classmate Tenma Morimura, and their underclass friend Shimon Nagareyama are sucked into a mysterious old well. When they awake, they are in Kyō, another world that resembles Kyoto during the Heian Period. According to the young scion of the Star Clan, Fujihime, Akane is the Ryūjin no Miko (Priestess of the Dragon God) who has come to save Kyō from the ambitions of the Oni Clan. In this task, Akane has the help of eight beautiful and single men known as the Hachiyō, and her friends Tenma and Shimon number among them. Initially, Akane is bewildered by her new circumstances, but she gradually comes to face up to her own destiny and understand the world of Kyō.

Harukanaru Toki no Naka gives players the option of trying to win the heart of one of the men and live happily ever after. The heroine must also fight evil with the help of the attractive young men. The result is a hybrid game with a visual novel–like interaction mode, a simple role-playing video game battle mode, and a board game–like map.

Haruka is made up of ten chapters, eight of which involve the core gameplay. These chapters take place over a two-week period and involve traveling around the Kyō map, searching for various key items. Kyō is made up of roughly 20 areas and it is possible to visit three in one day. However, most areas are possessed by onryō vengeful ghosts that must be dispelled before players can enter, and fighting them consumes one of the three visit chances.

Haruka's battle system is limited in comparison to most CRPGs of its day. The maximum party size is 3 characters, but only Akane is under the direct control of the player. Though Akane can attack and defend, her other abilities – the use of healing items and spells, and the ability to encourage her comrades, are more useful. There is no magic point system as such. Casting spells is based on the morale of the Hachiyō members and the number of elemental fuda cards Akane has. Furthermore, there is no experience system and the character's hit points are refilled automatically between fights. The main reward for fighting, besides gaining entrance to a given area, is the chance to gain the trust of Hachiyō. The greater a Hachiyō member's rapport with Akane, the more effective he will be in battle.

General gameplay in the remake remains but with some alterations, like new portraits. New endings. Select story and character events are now fully voiced. Still images have been recolored with smoother colors, shadows, and highlights. And the opening movie has been altered.

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 2

8.0

Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) February 28, 2002
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 2 takes place 100 years after the prior game, Harukanaru Toki no Naka de. Kyō is in turmoil because of a power struggle going on between the emperor and the retired emperor, and the people of Kyō are falling into desperation, fearing the coming of the end of the world. Karin, a modern-day high school girl, is summoned to be the Ryūjin no Miko who will save Kyō.

J

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 3

7.6

J

Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) December 22, 2004
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 3 is the third main entry in the Haruka series.

In this game, Nozomi Kasuga and her two friends get sent across time and space to a place to the world called Kyo. Nozomi finds herself to be the Priestess of the White Dragon, and must seal away the vengeful spirits, onryo, and return home to her own world.

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 3: Izayoiki

8.5

Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) September 22, 2005
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Izayoiki is a gaiden to the third Haruka title. The game is a revision of the original game with various extras. The developers main goal was to appease Haruka 3 fans by offering different visuals and perspectives of the main characters.

The Treasure Box edition includes an illustration book of the main cast and eight post cards.

"psxdatacenter.com"

J

7.0

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 3: Unmei no Meikyuu

J

Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) March 23, 2006
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Unmei no Meikyuu is the canonical sequel to the third Haruka. Like other Neo-romance fan discs, the narrative is a shorter experience than its base and concludes in eight chapters.

The Premium Box includes a memorial CD and an illustration book. One of Yuzuru's event images is missing on the CD so Ruby Party offered it as a free download with their apologies.

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 4

7.6

Premium Box

Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei, Koei Tecmo Games
Release date	(jp) June 19, 2008
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 4 is the fourth installment in the Haruka series. It's the first to be rendered with 3D models. It was voted as the number one otome game of the year for 2008.

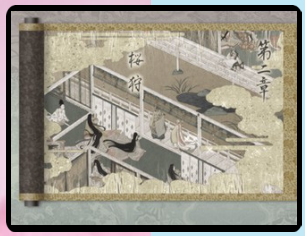
Since the third installment was the climax of the Heian period, Ruby Party members wanted to explore the series's title of a "faraway time". They decided on a prequel title set in ancient Japan with aims to explain various aspects and origins of the series's lore. While its primary aim is to be a fantasy title to contrast its quasi-historical predecessors, it's heavily inspired by mythology in India and Japan. The overall theme of this title is "forbidden love".

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 4 follows a similar RPG dominant format featured in the series's third title.

Its Premium Box version included a still image collection book and an art card by Tohko Mizuno. The Treasure Box edition includes these books with a batch of new illustrations from Mizuno and a gemstone set used to represent the Eight Guardians in the series. A minor mistake was made with the gemstone collection for which the company issued an official statement and apology.

J

7.3



J

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de: Maihitoyo

Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) September 21, 2006
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de Maihitoyo is the branding name for one of Ruby Party's multi-media projects — the others being the Angelique Gemme Stories and Twin Collection series. Maihitoyo is the name for two games, an animated movie, two drama CDs, a light novel, and a live theatrical production set within the first Haruka game. Each medium provides the same basic plot with varying characters, backdrops, and events. Developers stated that their goal was for fans to experiment and enjoy whatever medium that most appealed to them.

The overall gameplay has been changed to resemble the third entry using Hachiyoushou character portraits. Backgrounds from previous Haruka titles are often reused for events in this title. or the first time in the series, the protagonist's name will be audibly spoken if her default name is kept.

The Premium Box included an illustration book of the Maihitoyo game and a printed foldout of the stylized chapter illustrations. A memobook was added to the purchase if the game was reserved at select game outlets, and Hori printed a PS2 memory card in its image.

"koei.wikia.com"

Premium Box

8.0

Harukanaru Toki no Naka de: Yumenoukihashi Special

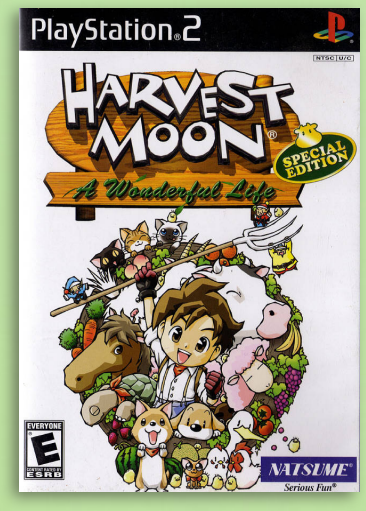
Developer	Ruby Party
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) January 29, 2009
Genre	Visual novel, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

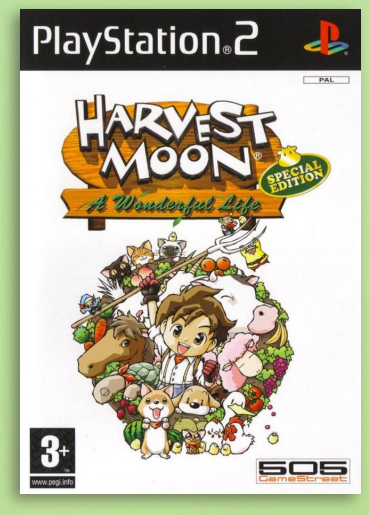
Harukanaru Toki no Naka de Yume no Ukihashi is a crossover game of the first three Heian period centric Haruka entries. The game is a port of a Nintendo DS release. The PlayStation2 version comes with more fully voiced scenes, and the two divine guards get more plot scenarios.

The Premium Box edition includes autographs from the voice actors and an original epilogue CD.

J

6.8





J N P

Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life Special Edition

Developer	TOSE
Publisher	Marvelous, (us) Natsume, SCEA, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) November 11, 2004
Genre	Simulation, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life Special Edition is an enhanced port of the GameCube game, Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life, featuring minor changes and add-ons to the original. The most notable changes were the ability to have a daughter, the ability to marry Lumina, and the ability to continue playing after death.

The player starts the game with one cow, and can later acquire additional, higher-quality cattle as well as male sheep, male and female chickens, and a male horse. The cow will stop producing milk after 40 days, and will have to be impregnated for her to continue making milk. In addition to these traditional Harvest Moon animals, this is also the first game in the series to feature ducks and a goat. The ducks appear not to incubate eggs of their own, but after acquiring ducks, some of the eggs the player harvests from chickens will hatch as ducklings. It is notable that no fertile eggs are produced in the absence of a male chicken, despite the presence of female ducks. The goat produces milk for one year then stops, and may be sold in A Wonderful Life Special Edition for 1000G.

The player also starts the game with a dog, and has the choice of floppy or pointed ears. Later in the game, the player may receive a cat from Romana. Also seen in the wilderness are a tanuki, a lizard, and a turtle, as well as a chihuahua that appears to be a pet at the dig site.

Also notable is the Mukumuku, who resembles an abominable snowman. The Mukumuku can only be seen during Winter near the tree in which the Harvest Sprites live, and the surrounding area commonly referred to as “the forest.”

The player’s farm has three fields, with varying levels of fertility. Plants must be watered more than once per day and nourished with fertilizer to obtain high-quality fruits and vegetables. Each crop has its ideal growing season, and will do poorly if planted at the wrong time of year. To obtain the highest quality crops and seeds, the player must water and fertilize the crops every day.

The game offers a variety of crops and trees, and also offers the ability to create hybrid crops. The player can do this by feeding any two different seeds or crops to a talking plant, Tartan, who appears after befriending Takakura and visiting him in the morning, from Chapter 2 onwards.

This is the first Harvest Moon game in which the player not only has a child after marriage, but the child ages to adulthood as well. The player’s son will look similar to their wife, and have a unique set of interests and talents. The child’s developing personality may be influenced by taking him places, introducing him to people, and giving him gifts related to various fields. At the end of the game, the (now adult) son will choose one of seven possible careers: farmer, rancher, musician, artist, scholar, athlete, or scientist. If he becomes a farmer or a rancher, he will take over the family farm, although he can not marry.

The game was developed by Victor Interactive Software, and is part of the long-running Story of Seasons series of video games. The GameCube version offers connectivity with the Game Boy Advance game, Harvest Moon: Friends of Mineral Town. Notably, Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life is the last entry developed by Victor Interactive Software prior to its acquirement by Marvelous Entertainment, who would go on to be the lead developers of future Harvest Moon titles.

Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life received largely positive reviews upon its initial GameCube release.

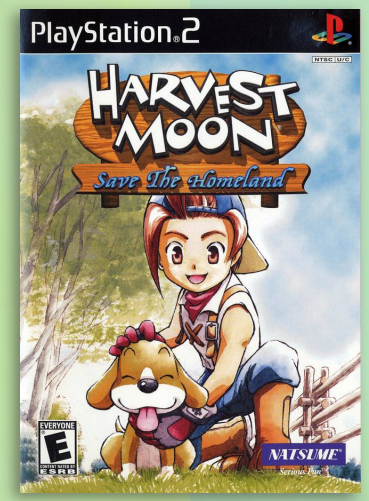
The Special Edition released for PlayStation 2 did not receive such strong praise. IGN's Juan Castro gave it a score of 6/10 and remarked "*The differences, including an increase in brides, choosing the gender of your child and the ability to play forever, make little difference. What does make a difference, though, is the drastic drop in framerate, increase in load times and muddy graphics.*" The Official Playstation 2 Magazine of the UK gave it a 7/10 rating.

The Special Edition was later re-released on the PlayStation 3 and PlayStation 4. The PlayStation 4 version of the game is said to have fixed most of the lag from the PlayStation 2, making the game more playable, added trophy support, better resolution and quality. However, some lag issues still remain and little glitches still remain. It is unknown if this title may ever receive an update for fixing some of these issues.

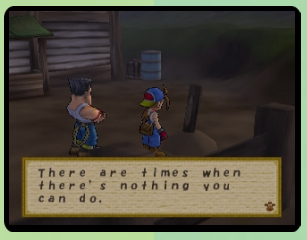
The Special Edition was later re-released on the PlayStation 3 and PlayStation 4. The PlayStation 4 version of the game is said to have fixed most of the lag from the PlayStation 2, making the game more playable, added trophy support, better resolution and quality. However, some lag issues still remain and little glitches still remain. It is unknown if this title may ever receive an update for fixing some of these issues.

7.6

Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland



J N



Developer	Victor Interactive Software
Publisher	Victor Interactive, Marvelous Entertainment, (us) Natsume, SCEA, (eu) Ubisoft
Release date	(jp) July 5, 2001
Genre	Simulation, Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland, released in Japan as Bokujō Monogatari 3: Heart ni Hi o Tsukete, is a 2001 farm simulation game, part of the popular Story of Seasons series of video games.

The player takes on the role of a 21-year-old man whose grandfather recently died and left him his farm. Upon arriving at the farm, nominally to pick up his grandfather's belongings, the player's character encounters three "Harvest Sprites" and the Harvest Goddess, who ask him to stay on the farm and help them.

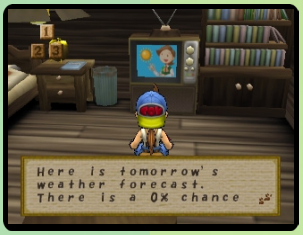
The area is slated to be demolished within a year to make way for a resort and amusement park. The goal of the game is to find a way to save the town before the year's end.

The goal of Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland is to find a way to save the village from turning into a resort by the end of the year. There are 9 possible ways to save the village depending on the choices the player makes, such as which villagers the player befriends. For most of the endings, the character is involved in a quest (digging out a treasure, looking for magical ingredients, etc.).

After reaching an ending, the player has the option of restarting the game to try to "save the homeland" again, possibly achieving a different ending. Upon restarting the year the player may keep the money and animals earned. Each time the player finds a new ending, it gets saved in the Endings List, and the player receives the profiles of the villagers involved in that ending.

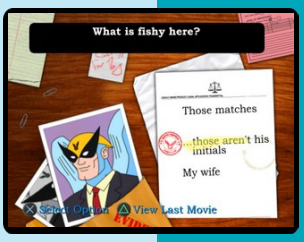
Like other Harvest Moon games, players must tend to their farm by growing and selling crops and gathering produce from his or her animals. Unlike the other Harvest Moon games, marriage and parenthood are not included as options.

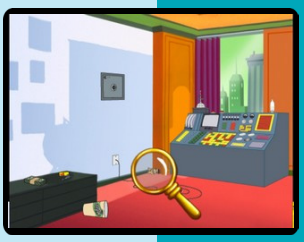
As in other Harvest Moon games, the player can adopt a dog and a horse. The horse can be used to get around the village faster, while the dog can be trained for useful tasks, such as herding cows into the barn. The player can also own cows and chickens.



Harvey Birdman: Attorney at Law

6.3





Developer High Voltage Software
Publisher Capcom
Release date (us) January 8, 2008
Genre Adventure
Mode 1 Player

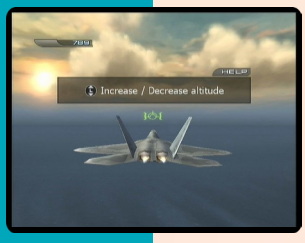
Harvey Birdman: Attorney at Law was published by Capcom, and is based on the Adult Swim cartoon of the same name, with collaboration of the show's writers and voice actors.

The game is played like the Ace Attorney Capcom court themed series, but with the Harvey Birdman type of humor and feel. The game also include cameos of Capcom characters within the five cases.

The game received "mixed" reviews according to the review aggregation website Metacritic. The A.V. Club gave the it a C–, calling it *"A decent rental, but not a wise investment."* The New York Times gave the game an unfavorable review, stating that the game design was *"just plain bad"*.

Heatseeker

6.0

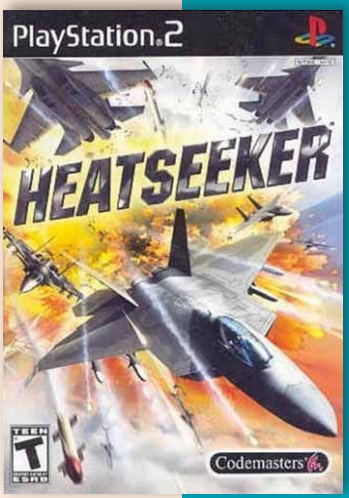


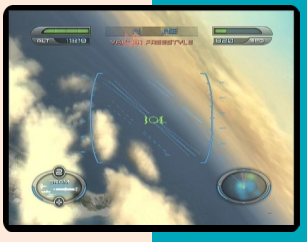
Developer IR Gurus
Publisher Codemasters
Release date (eu) March 30, 2007
Genre Shooter, Simulation
Mode 1 Player

Players take on the role of an International Council pilot Mike "Downtown" Hudson. The game begins with a terrorist attack. The plot follows the International Council's attempt to thwart a dangerous dictator with an advanced nuclear cache named Bae Jung-Tae.

Heatseeker is an aerial combat game that pits players against a variety of computer-controlled airborne opponents. Players are equipped with modern military hardware and a choice of weapons. The game offers players access to 17 jets and 37 different weapons.

Missions take place over Korea, the Caribbean and Antarctica. Heatseeker has a display feature called ImpactCam, which allows the player to follow the progress of a missile once it is fired through to impact, from several camera angles. Environments are destructible, and players can blow up bridges, airports, and military bases.





Heart no Kuni no Alice

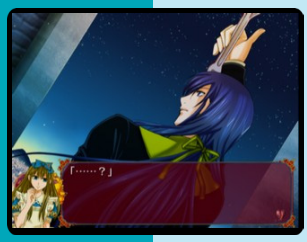
6.0

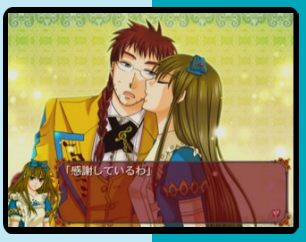
Developer	Prototype
Publisher	Prototype
Release date	(jp) September 18, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

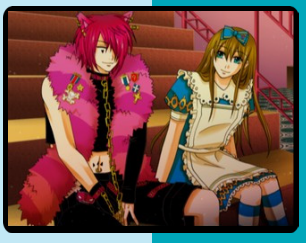
Alice in the Country of Hearts is a Japanese female-oriented visual novel. The game is a re-imagining of Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. There were multiple sequel games, as well as multiple manga series, an OAV and an anime film adaptation.

In the game, Alice Liddell is an insecure girl who is overshadowed by her sister's beauty and grace. During one of their outings, Alice's sister goes to get a deck of cards for a game while Alice falls asleep. When a white rabbit comes and encourages her to chase him, Alice assumes she is dreaming and tries to go back to napping until the rabbit turns into a man with white rabbit ears and carries her off. Peter White (the White Rabbit) throws Alice into a hole that appears in her yard and jumps in after her. When they land in a strange, open area, Peter starts confessing his undying love for her. He tells her to drink a 'medicine' but when she refuses, he simply pours the liquid into his mouth and then kisses her, forcing her to drink it. It is later revealed that whoever drinks this medicine, participates in a game, so says Peter. Alice learns that she is in Wonderland and the only way she might be able to return to her world is to interact and spend time with the strange people in Wonderland, which slowly refills the vial. However, Wonderland is going through violent times—everyone is reckless and uncaring as to who lives or dies, and with a civil war going on everyone in the strange world finds it hard to trust each other with an instinct to kill.

Wonderland is split into various countries, with most of the action taking place in the 'Country of Hearts'. It is divided into three main territories: The Castle of Hearts, Hatter Mansion, home of Wonderland's Mafia, and the Amusement Park, run by the marquis Mary Gowland (the Duke). All three territories are at war with each other, with the only neutral area being the Clock Tower Plaza in the centre of the Country of Hearts. Alice moves into the Tower and ends up living and helping Julius Monrey, whose job it is to repair clocks, which work as the hearts of the inhabitants of Wonderland.







Deliver Her From Evil.

Haunting Ground™

From the creators of
Resident Evil.

The vile stench of death reaches out from every corner of this wretched place. Torturous cries still echo around its walls as a sinister air fills your lungs.

Waking up in this darkened fortress, trapped within its confines, you must search its ancient rooms and hallways and try to makesense of your forgotten past, before the horror of the Haunting Ground imprisons you forever.

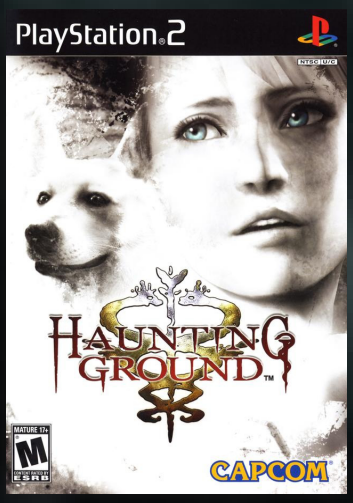
"Beautifully crafted piece of psychological horror. Haunting Ground comes with our highest recommendation."
GAMESMASTER 86%

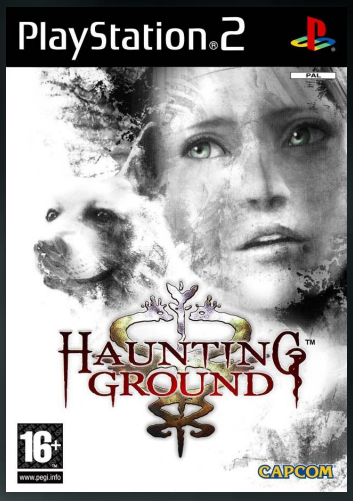
CAPCOM
capcom-europe.com

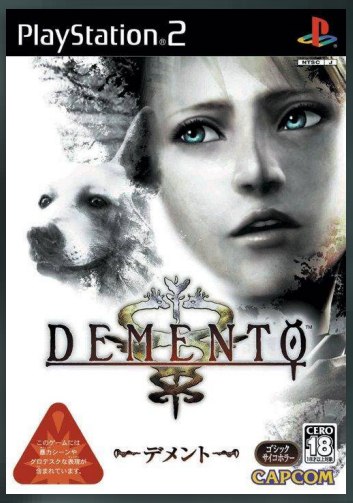
PlayStation 2

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2005 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. "PS" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

6.7







JNP

Haunting Ground

Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) April 21, 2005
Genre	Survival horror
Mode	1 Player

Haunting Ground, known in Japan as Demento, is a survival horror developed and published by Capcom for the PlayStation 2.

The story follows Fiona Belli, a young woman who wakes up in the dungeon of a castle after being involved in a car accident. She quickly befriends a White Shepherd, Hewie, and begins to explore the castle with his aid to seek a means of escape and unravel the mysteries of it and its inhabitants. The game shares many similarities with Capcom's earlier survival horror title Clock Tower 3 (2002), and has been described as a spiritual successor to the Clock Tower series.

The player controls Fiona Belli directly and gives commands to her canine companion, Hewie. Fiona can run and perform a backstep maneuver, both of which reduce stamina. She can also crouch down to hide from enemy pursuers. Fiona can kick and tackle enemies as well, but tackling also reduces stamina. Losing too much stamina will result in Fiona becoming exhausted, causing her movements to slow down or possibly stop altogether. Exhaustion can be revived with certain items or with time. Fiona can interact with the environment by checking items, opening doors, and climbing ladders. The player can utilize hiding spots to evade pursuers. Other areas act as retaliation points that allow Fiona to use her environment to counterattack against her enemy, although some of these locations can only be used once.

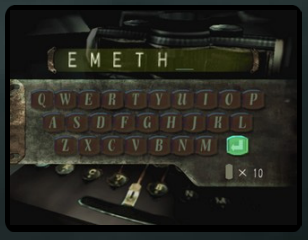
Commanding Hewie is an integral part of Haunting Ground's gameplay. At the beginning of the game, he won't be completely friendly and obey all of Fiona's commands. The player will have to build a friendship and gain his trust in order to survive the game. Hewie can be told to sniff out items, check suspicious areas or items, attack an enemy, or called back to Fiona's side. The player can praise Hewie by petting and feeding him, both which can heal his vitality. Likewise, he can be scolded when he won't listen to commands. He can be told to "stand ready" before attacking, which will increase his attack power.

Enemies can hear footsteps and other sounds. When Fiona is in a dangerous situation, she may fall into a panic. During panic mode, visibility gets worse, the menu can't be opened, and she will begin running on her own, tripping and falling into walls. Panic mode will elapse after some time, or certain items can be used to calm her down. If Fiona sustains a significant amount of damage, she will slow down and become unable to backstep. If she receives too much damage she can die. Damage heals with time or items can be used to bring her vitality back to normal. While some items are used to heal Fiona and Hewie, others are used to damage enemies. Some can be thrown while others are set like traps for the enemy to walk over. Some items are found by searching while others can be crafted in refining rooms.

Capcom began development knowing they wanted to make a survival horror game with a lead female

character. Believing that the female lead would not bode well with retailers and players alike, they added in a dog partner that could attack enemies. After this change, they further designed the gameplay around this partner mechanic. The cinematics were directed by actor and director, Naoto Takenaka. He directly supervised the motion capture performances used for all the characters, placing emphasis on dramatic performance. He took inspiration from Universal Monsters such as Frankenstein and Bela Lugosi's Dracula. Takenaka played the motion capture role for Riccardo, and Japanese actors Yasue Sato and Jiro Sato played Fiona and Debilitas respectively. Rather than streaming audio files, the music for Haunting Ground was generated by using the PS2's built-in sounds. This way, the composers could easily change the tempo of the music during gameplay.

Haunting Ground received "mixed or average" reviews per ratings aggregator Metacritic. Critics were quick to compare it to the Clock Tower series, specifically its 2002 installment, Clock Tower 3 (2002). The defenseless heroine elements and hide-and-chase gameplay were found to be highly derivative of the former titles The dog companion was, for some, a well-received addition to the gameplay formula, with Eurogamer's Kristan Reed comparing it positively to Ico. Others found the dog and other gameplay elements to be repetitive and contributors to poor pacing. The graphics, cinematics, and atmosphere were universally praised. The staff at 1UP.com described the environments as *"some of the most detailed, lavish 3D environments Capcom has ever produced."* Kill Screen's Zach Budgor compared Haunting Ground's *"psychological landscape"* to Dario Argento's film Suspiria (1977) and also highlighted its grotesque expressionism. Despite these highlights, critics ultimately felt that Haunting Ground was too predictable and relied heavily on clichés previously established in the horror genre. For this reason, Reed said it *"becomes stifled by its own eventual lack of ambition to break away from the norms instilled by two generations of Japanese horror adventures."* The staff at 1UP.com felt the game was dated when compared with the recently released Resident Evil 4 (2005), but said, *"Haunting Ground isn't without merit, it's just that the merits are buried deep in an occasionally thrilling, mostly 'been there, done that' game of indistinct origin."*

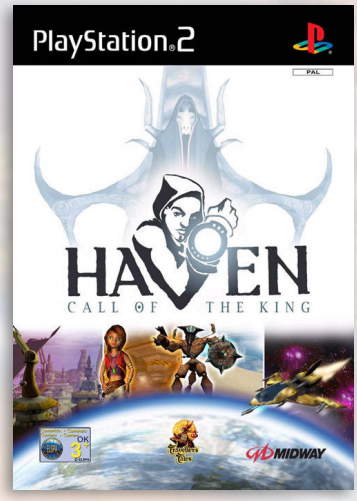


Some critics highlighted Haunting Ground's sexual themes surrounding the objectification of Fiona as one of its best elements. Jeremy Dunham of IGN stated that *"Haunting Ground's success comes from making the player feel like a desired and endangered object."* He found the plot was kept interesting due to the disturbing suggestive behaviors of Fiona's pursuers. Kill Screen's Budgor also found the drive for the enemies to kill Fiona creates a continuous tension, as its unclear nature lends to an uncomfortable confusion for both Fiona and the player. Budgor found that removing the player's control at critical points highlights Fiona's subjectivity, with the sounds and images expressing ideas of *"violation, transgression, and bodily autonomy."*

Haunting Ground has been a subject of game studies regarding the relationship between players and their avatars. It was found that the altering states of Fiona's subjectivity change the role of the player in the game. The player is never a spectator, nor do they take on the embodiment of Fiona, but float between these states of involvement.

Haven: Call of the King

6.9



Developer	Traveller's Tales
Publisher	Midway
Release date	(us) November 17, 2002
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

Haven: Call of the King is a 2002 multi-genre action-adventure about a young man named Haven who seeks to liberate his people from the tyranny of enslavement. The game combines action, platforming, puzzle, shoot 'em up, racing and space combat elements.

At its core, Haven: Call of the King is an action-adventure game played from a third-person perspective, with much of the gameplay based around platforming. During the main platforming levels, Haven can perform various basic abilities; jump, double jump, high jump, crouch and attack. Haven also has access to an energy shield which he can deploy in front of him to protect him from incoming projectiles. He can deploy the shield indefinitely if it is not absorbing any impacts, but when it does deflect objects, it begins to deplete. As well as deploying the shield in front of him, Haven can also crouch and completely cover himself with the shield. He can also use the shield to perform a "shield smash," which is necessary for killing certain enemies and accessing certain pots.

Haven's main offensive weapon is a modified yo-yo device known as a "mag-ball." Its range is limited, but it can be used to defeat enemies, smash pots and grip onto "mag-rides;" electrical transports which bring Haven to other locations in a level. Haven can also use the mag-ball to perform a "power-spin" (where he spins 360 degrees with the mag-ball extended at all times, damaging anything that comes within range). He can also acquire a variety of firearms during the game, which briefly replace the mag-ball as his offensive weapon. These weapons include a laser shot, a rapid-fire cannon, a ricochet cannon, a five-way shot and a plasma shot.

A major part of the gameplay during platforming levels involves item collecting. For example, hearts, which are found in pots scattered throughout most levels and also dropped by some defeated enemies, replenish Haven's health. Catana orbs (small yellow disk-like objects) replenish his antidote meter, which, if it falls to zero, begins to deplete his health. Shield energy replenishes his shield abilities. Other collectibles include feathers, which are necessary for Haven to call Talon, a mechanical bird he has constructed. Often, calling Talon is necessary to progress through a level. On other occasions, Talon can carry Haven to secret parts of a level, otherwise inaccessible. Cogs are necessary to operate machinery, and are always a story-related items. Also found in many levels are silver keys. Any level which has a "Runepot" requires Haven to locate five silver keys before he can open the pot. Runepots hold Runestones, which can be used to unlock secret Runetowers later in the game. Completing the challenges in the Runetowers reveals Black Diamonds, which must be collected if the player wishes to complete the game to 100%.

Other gameplay sections involve different control schemes and game mechanics. For example, when wearing the jet pack, Haven can accelerate upwards by expending fuel. When using the glider, as

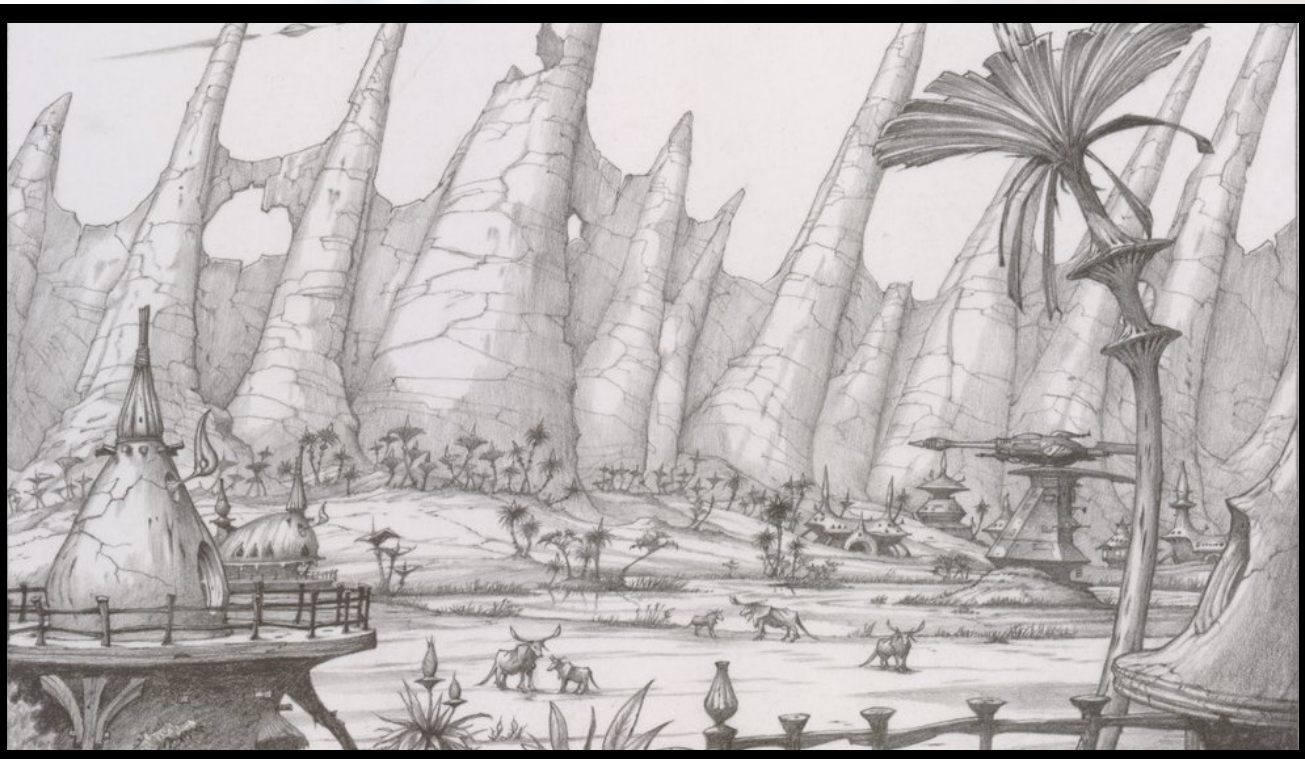
well as basic maneuverability, he can perform an air brake. In the biplane, he can roll left and right. In the speedboat and quadracer, he can accelerate and brake. When operating a turret or spaceship, he has access to forward and aft missiles and can lock on to enemies. The spaceship Sunsurfer, which Haven acquires towards the end of the game, also has access to different types of missiles, and can equip a shield.

Haven: Call of the King was first announced on May 16, 2002 when Midway Games revealed they had partnered with Traveller's Tales to develop an original multi-genre game. Midway announced that Haven would be a third-person game with strong platforming elements combined with many other types of genre, such as turret-based shooting, land and water racing, space combat, and arena battles. They also revealed the game would debut on the PlayStation 2, but would subsequently be released for Xbox and GameCube.

The game was first shown the following week, at the 2002 E3 event, where a playable demo was made available. Whilst no narrative or story elements were in place yet, the demo featured environments from the Virescent Village level and the refinery level. Midway stressed the free-roaming nature of the game, saying *"you can fully roam throughout the large environments on the ground, then get into a spaceship, point it at the sky and climb to outer space. Up there, you'll be able to do battle with whatever's mean, then return to the ground and start walking around again."* GameSpot's Gerald Villoria wrote of this aspect of the demo *"the planet and all the explorable areas in Haven are seamlessly linked--traveling from one area of the world to the next should incur no game stoppage due to load times. In fact, when Haven gains access to his flying vessel, he can literally rise above the planet's atmosphere and explore any of the continents. The landmasses smoothly raise in level of detail as the descending aircraft approaches, with nearly featureless topography slowly morphing into fully landscaped wilderness until the ship can literally hover above the treetops."*

Helene Sheeler; Midway Vice President of Marketing; *"It's always been said that you can't combine excellent shooting, racing, flying, platforming and other gameplay mechanics and make a rock solid game. Haven: Call Of The King has done this on every level. Haven: Call Of The King features unrivaled gameplay with an almost endless combination of action-movie-styled gameplay elements and an engaging storyline, highly stylized characters and crisp cinematics."*

In a June interview with GameSpot, Traveller's Tales revealed the game had been in development for over three years, with them funding the project themselves, long before Midway got involved. They explained the game utilises a game engine specifically designed for Haven, which allows smooth transition from third-person gameplay to piloting a vehicle. The engine also powers the cutscenes, allowing the camera to move and sweep around the landscape of a level, giving the player an idea of the route they have to take. Landscapes are fractally generated using the PlayStation 2's vector processors, which allows for considerable draw distance. The game also features night and day cycles and alternating weather patterns, such as randomly occurring rain showers (which prompt Haven to pull his hood up when outdoors). The developers were also keen to stress the game features no loading times; *"Traveller's Tales intends for the game's loading to be invisible to players after the initial startup, thanks to*



Concept art: "Defended Village" by Rodney Matthews

carefully managed memory usage and constant streaming." They also revealed that after the PlayStation 2 launch, the game would be released for the Game Boy Advance as well as GameCube and Xbox.

Helene Sheeler; Midway Vice President of Marketing;
"Utilizing FreeFormer gameplay – which allows the player to experience multiple gameplay mechanics blended together in a virtually limitless world – a variety of genres are fluidly integrated into one game. In the game, players have total freedom to move anywhere in the world on foot or by vehicle with smooth gameplay transitions between turret-based shooting, boat racing, bike battles, plane fighting, gladiator arena combat and space exploration. In addition, the groundbreaking technology allows players to seamlessly travel from the earth, through the atmosphere, into outer space, and back again. The gameplay in Haven: Call Of The King projects a cinematic-type quality with visually stunning worlds and environments. Like scenes from a movie, all of the levels in Haven: Call Of The King perfectly link together the character-driven story, which directs the gameplay and unfolds against a backdrop of the many enchanting worlds."

In a 2006 interview with Gamasutra, writer/director/designer Jon Burton stated;
"I wanted to make a game like Haven ever since I played Mercenary, an old wire-frame game on the Amiga. As a player, I loved the slow reveal of the size of the world and being able to gradually break out of the traditional bounds expected in games. Playing Haven starts you in a village with basic platform gameplay. As you progress you get to ride across a fractal landscape, get a speed boat, then a quad bike, then a sailing boat, then a plane, and eventually a spaceship. Each step allows you to realize you could explore more and more of the game world. You could literally take off in a space ship from a level, fly around the whole fractal planet or off into space to another planet and land by a castle on another world and run off into the dungeons."

In July, a more complete demo was made available to gaming websites, featuring platforming levels, space combat, racing, and underwater sections. Traveller's Tales explained the game's story had been written first, with concept art then designed by Rodney Matthews. The story was then broken down into different gameplay genres. Expert game designers for each genre were brought on board to develop each small section of the game. The main team of developers then took each of those sections and attempted to unify them into one seamless whole. This demo also revealed more of the ca-

pabilities of the game engine, which could depict heat distortions, particle effects, real-time light sourcing, shadows, and reflections, as well as the already revealed day and nights cycles and random weather effects.

GameSpot's Ricardo Torres noted that *"the varied landscape is fractally generated using the PlayStation 2's vector units, which are working overtime for the game and allow for some very impressive effects. For example, when you board a spaceship in a third-person sequence in the game, you'll be able to take off and head out into space without a loading screen. The game will track your movement and reduce the size and detail of the environments as you gain altitude. The reverse is true when you're approaching a planet and go to land--you'll find that detail seen from the air will scale in as you get closer."*

However, in August, IGN's Hilary Goldstein expressed concern about the lack of attention the game was getting; *"Haven has received little to no hype. In fact, it seems barely on the consciousness of the gaming public at all."* On October 30, Midway trademarked the term "FreeFormer gameplay" to describe the gameplay mechanics, stating *"FreeFormer gameplay is the next major development in videogaming. The technology in Haven: Call Of The King allows for an unbelievable cinematic-style smoothness and experience as you encounter the varied play mechanics in the game."*

Haven: Call of the King received "average" reviews according to Metacritic.

GameSpot's Mathew Gallant called it *"an often surprising action-packed platformer with a distinctive style and plenty of challenge."* He was critical of Haven's mag-ball weapon, writing *"the jumping and other mechanics of Haven are solid, but the limitations of the mag-ball and the fairly frequent requirements of its use tend to overshadow them."* He concluded *"While Haven does offer a lot, it's not quite a sure bet. Primarily, the annoying control problems involved with the mag-ball can make an already difficult game needlessly frustrating [...] Yet the overall feel is that of a very intense and action-packed game. The fast-paced, quickly changing gameplay is refreshingly unordinary, and while there's an excellent chance that fans of platformers will love the diversity and challenge, some may find it a little too restless and overdone."*

Game Revolution's Johnny Liu was critical of the core platformer gameplay: *"the platform events come off as a standard, undisguised item hunt."* He concluded *"Though it's admirably ambitious, Haven is crippled by trying to do too much. Instead of simply having these separate parts strung together, it would have worked better had the game allowed you to switch from any of these game styles at will."*

On May 29, 2003, Xicat Interactive announced that despite the game's commercial failure on PlayStation 2, they would be publishing the game for both the Xbox and GameCube later in the year. However, neither version was ever made.

Haven was originally intended as the first part of a trilogy, however, due to the game's commercial failure, the second and third parts were never made. For writer/director/designer Jon Burton, the game was an extremely personal project. Speaking in 2006, he opined that because it began as a basic platformer, players and reviewers didn't give it a fair chance: *"Because the first hour was basically a platform game people would play the game and write it off as another platformer."* Burton always intended for the story to continue, and had very specific ideas as to how the plot would have developed: *"the storyline was written to be an allegory of the Christian Gospel. As a Christian, I have always wanted to try and create a 'Christian' game, but that is incredibly difficult as the whole basis of Christianity is for you to give your life to Jesus, and trust and pray to God for help and guidance. That doesn't make for the best gameplay [...] In games, you want to be the hero, and Christianity is all about humility, which is the opposite of you being the hero. However, C. S. Lewis wrote a popular story which was an allegory of the Gospel, called The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. He created a compelling story with pro-active characters, that also had a gospel message. So that's what I tried to do with Haven. The good guy was called Athellion (a the-Lion), the bad guy was called Vetch (witch), the traitor who caused the world's downfall was called Dasis (Ju-"Das Is"-cariot), and so on. There are loads of things like this in the game. The only problem was, the game ends with a cliffhanger ending paralleling The Crucifixion. As no sequel was ever made, there was no "after 3 days..." scene and so the full story was never told."*

SHOOT FIRST. ASK QUESTIONS LATER.

"PlayStation" and "PS2" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "The Third Place" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. © Sega Corporation, 2001. Developed by Amuze AB. Published by Sega Corporation. Distributed by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved.

PlayStation 2

HEADHUNTER

You awake on a surgeon's table suffering from amnesia. Who are you? Where are you? How did you get here? But don't forget the golden rule; bullets first, questions later. Track down felons, solve puzzles, ride motorbikes and survive gunfights to regain your title of the world's no.1 bounty hunter and rediscover your identity. Any questions? Made by Sega for PlayStation 2.

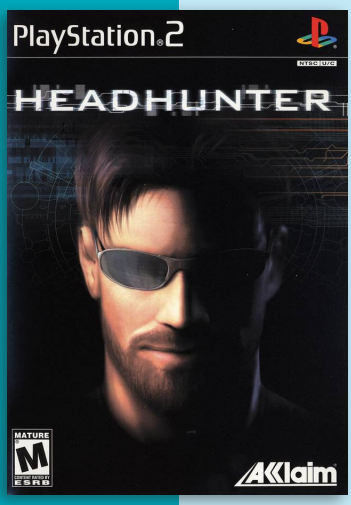
SEGA AMUZE

www.headhunterthegame.com

PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE

Headhunter

7.4



Developer	Amuze
Publisher	Sega, (us) Acclaim
Release date	(eu) March 22, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

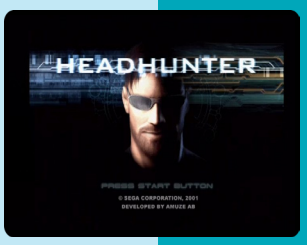
Headhunter is an action-adventure released for Dreamcast and PlayStation 2.

According to John Kroknes, creative director at Amuze, the game was strongly influenced by 1980s action movies and Paul Verhoeven's science fiction films.

For the majority of the game, the gameplay is that of a third-person shooter as players control protagonist Jack Wade. Jack travels between the main levels of the game on his motorcycle, and these sections take the form of a racing game.

The game's storyline progresses through standard FMV cutscenes, propaganda commercials and satirical news broadcasts (presented by the fictional Bill Waverley and Kate Gloss).

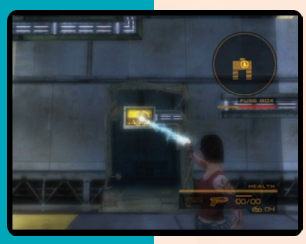
The Dreamcast version received "generally favourable reviews", while the PS2 version received "average" reviews, according to Metacritic.



N P

Headhunter: Redemption

6.2

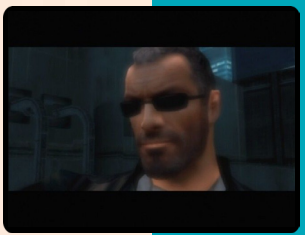


N P

Developer	Amuze
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(eu) August 27, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

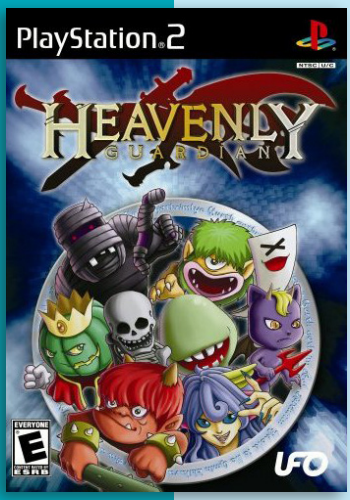
Set twenty years after the Bloody Mary Virus (released in the original Headhunter), Jack and his new partner Leeza X find out something is amiss when they try to stop Weapon Smugglers. The pair must face opposition from the Glass Skyscrapers filled and media controlled 'Above' and The Dregs & Criminal Infested colonies of 'Below'.

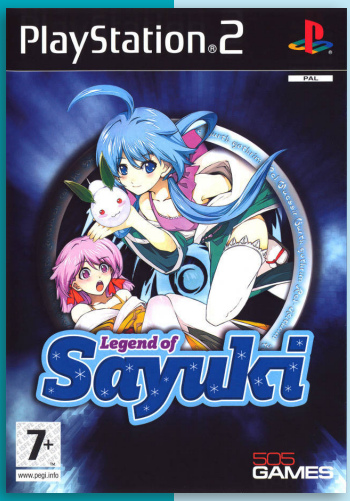
The gameplay is set in 3rd-person view with ability to rotate camera or set it behind the back at the single click. Headhunter's main accessory is IRIS (Intelligent Realtime Information Scanner). Once players get the IRIS, they'll be able to scan every item just by pointing the gun at it, or use the scanner in 1st-person view which will let players examine the surroundings in more detail. Also, IRIS will provide players with a full 3D map info even displaying the enemies.



Heavenly Guardian

3.7





JNP

Developer	Starfish
Publisher	UFO Int., SCEA, (eu) 505 Games, (jp) Starfish (JP)
Release date	(us) February 26, 2008
Genre	Shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

Heavenly Guardian, known in Europe as Legend of Sayuki, is a scrolling shooter developed by Starfish SD.

The story is different in single- and multi-player modes, but the gameplay remains identical.

In single player, the story centers around the snow goddess Sayuki's love for a boy who lives in a nearby village. Upon visiting the village one day, she learns that the boy has fallen under a curse, sleeping permanently. Sayuki then travels across the land with her pet snow rabbit, Toto, to find the ingredients for the cure to his curse.

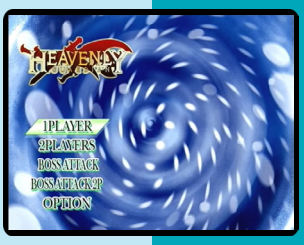
In multiplayer, the story is about a beauty contest held by the Snow Goddess Tribe. Sayuki and her younger sister, Koyuki, decide to compete for first place. The contest is a trial race for the two sisters to destroy the most ghosts and collect the most snowballs in their path.

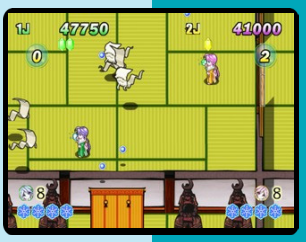
Heavenly Guardian, like the Kiki KaiKai series, is a scrolling shooter where the player moves a character in any direction and fire projectiles at enemies. It can be played alone, or cooperatively with a second player controlling Sayuki's sister, Koyuki. In single-player, Sayuki is followed by Toto, her pet snow rabbit, who shoots freezing shots in the same direction Sayuki attacks.

Heavenly Guardian was originally a PS2 sequel to Taito's Kiki KaiKai series (better known as Pocky & Rocky outside Japan) called simply "Kiki KaiKai 2". The game was canceled, as Starfish SD lost the Kiki KaiKai license, but would later resurface as a Wii game entitled "Kiki Kai World". This version was mostly similar to the canceled PS2 game, but with the main character's miko outfit recolored from red to blue. Instead of being a direct sequel to the original, it was more of a spiritual successor, as to avoid legal issues with Taito and its parent company, Square Enix.

To further separate the game from Kiki KaiKai, the graphics and theme of the game were completely redone, replacing the miko heroine with a snow goddess named Sayuki.

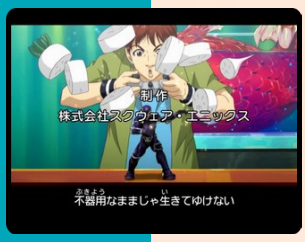
Although just a few magazines reviewed the game, Heavenly Guardian received poor ratings.

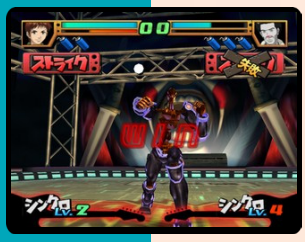




Heavy Metal Thunder

7.8





Developer Media Vision
Publisher Square Enix
Release date (jp) September 1, 2005
Genre Action, Fighting
Mode 1-2 Players

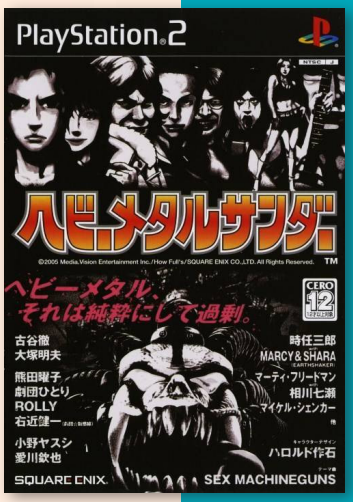
The game pits futuristic robots against one another in wrestling matches. The player controls a robot during battles using a four-icon menu. Three actions—strike, guard and grapple—can be executed at any time and augments the player's "beat meter". The fourth action, called "beat attack", can be performed once the beat meter is filled and inflicts special damage according to how hard the button is pressed. Icons sometime shake to indicate that they are recommended, but the player must react quickly as each turn is timed. A rock-paper-scissors set of rules determined the winner of each pair of actions.

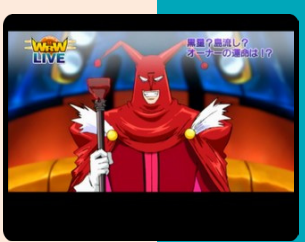
Anime cut scenes and fictional sponsor information are displayed before the start of each match. The player's robot can be customized to alter its appearance.

The game is set in a fictional Japan in the year 2980, in which competitive fights between radio-controlled robots has become a popular sport called "Robot-ress". The player takes on the role of Denki Akihabara, a high-school student whose family runs a butcher shop. Denki decides to become a Robot-ress master after learning about Heavy Metal Thunder, the world's strongest robot. At the beginning of the game, he receives a robot and an invitation to the Titan Fight tournament from his father, who is actually the world champion and owner of Heavy Metal Thunder. The Titan Fight is a competition in which losing robots are destroyed and their owners buried on Death Island. The plot spans roughly thirty years in total, with Denki over forty years old at the end of the game.

The music of Heavy Metal Thunder was composed by various heavy metal bands and musicians, including Michael Schenker and ex-Megadeth guitarist Marty Friedman. The eponymous song "Heavy Metal Thunder" written by the Sex Machineguns serves as the theme song of both the game and the Heavy Meta-san TV show.

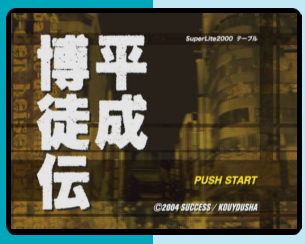
The game sold 3,367 copies the week of its release. It received a score of 30 out of 40 by Famitsu.





Heisei Bakutoden

7.0



J

Developer	Kouyousha
Publisher	Success
Release date	(jp) November 11, 2004
Genre	Board
Mode	1 Player

Heaisei Bakutoden is a table top game released in the budget SuperLite 2000 series. The game consist of a collection of games based on “gambling”.

The game feature two types of Game Modes. In “scenario mode” players play against opponents appearing one after the other according to the story. In “free mode” players can freely play any of the games.

Hello Kitty: Roller Rescue

7.2

Developer	Xpec
Publisher	Xplosiv, (jp) Hamster
Release date	(jp) April 28, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Hello Kitty: Roller Rescue (lit. “Hello Kitty’s Picopico Mission”) is a 2005 action-adventure-racing game developed by XPEC Entertainment for the PlayStation 2, GameCube, Xbox, and Windows.

The game features Hello Kitty and other Sanrio characters. The game also features exclusive character designs by Hunter Roberson and Rhett Deal.

J P

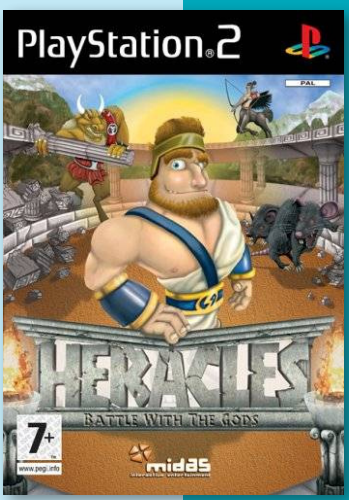
Heracles: Battle With The Gods

3.2

P

Developer	Midas Interactive Entertainment
Publisher	Midas Interactive Entertainment
Release date	(eu) March 10, 2006
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

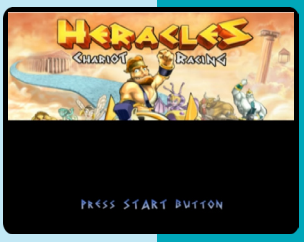
In this game, Heracles goes on an adventure to rescue Pegasus from the evil Poseidon, God of the sea and earn favour from the Gods. Only by succeeding in his quest can his banishment from Mount Olympus be undone. Heracles’ trials journey across the lands of Ancient Greece. With foes to defeat and treacherous landscapes to navigate, Heracles will require all his superhuman strength, stamina and agility save Pegasus.

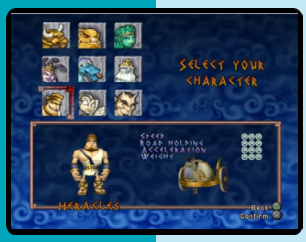


Heracles Chariot Racing

4.6

Developer	Neko Entertainment
Publisher	Midas Interactive Entertainment
Release date	(eu) June 27, 2007
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 (4) Players





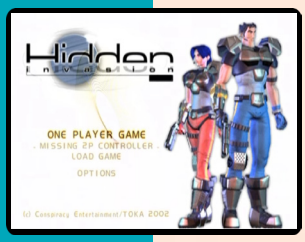
Heracles Chariot Racing is a racing game by Neko Entertainment. Players control Heracles or one of a number of characters from Greek mythology (such as Poseidon, Medusa and the Minotaur) in a series of horseless chariot races for the honor of being crowned the Champion Charioteer without a horse. In addition to picking up items to aid themselves, players can also hinder their opponents by using weaponry such as tridents, fireballs and Zeus' lightning in order to try trip them up.

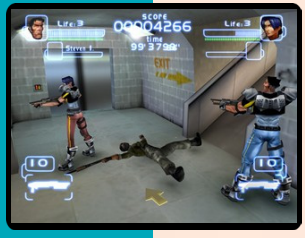
The game features a Championship mode consisting of 3 cups with 10 tracks spread across 5 mythical environments (including Mount Olympus and Hades), as well as single race and Battle modes. The game features split-screen multiplayer for up to 4 players across all modes.

P

Hidden Invasion

3.9





N P

Developer	Toka
Publisher	Swing! Deutschland, (us) Conspiracy Ent.
Release date	(eu) December 7, 2001
Genre	Third-person shooter
Mode	1-2 Players

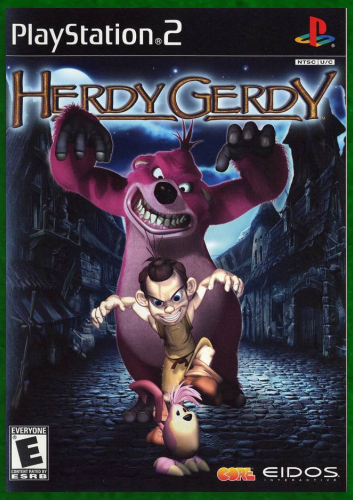
In Hidden Invasion, players are given the option of playing as either one of two playable characters, Dean Travis or Karen Bride. The two playable characters possess different stats and abilities allowing for multiple strategies. Players venture through multiple levels in seven stages. The camera is set allowing the player to see only an area of a level. Once the player leaves an area, the camera switches to the camera in the new area.

The game is set in the year 2027. One or two members of the Shadowforce Team is sent to assassinate the leader of a "terrorist" organization who has taken a hospital hostage in Alpha City. After defeating the terrorist boss, the agent is attacked by an unknown creature.

After the European release, Conspiracy Entertainment decided to make a North American release that feature adjusted gameplay changes, multiplayer mode and improvements.

6.9

Herdy Gerdy



JNP

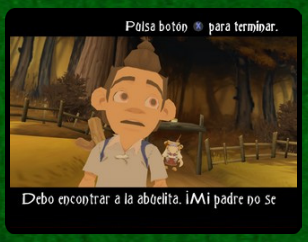
Developer	Core Design Ltd.
Publisher	Eidos Interactive
Release date	(eu) February 22, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

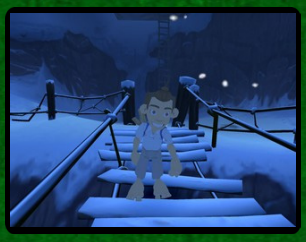
Herdy Gerdy is a strategy puzzle game for PlayStation 2. The game is best described as a virtual shepherd sim, with some adventure and platform elements.

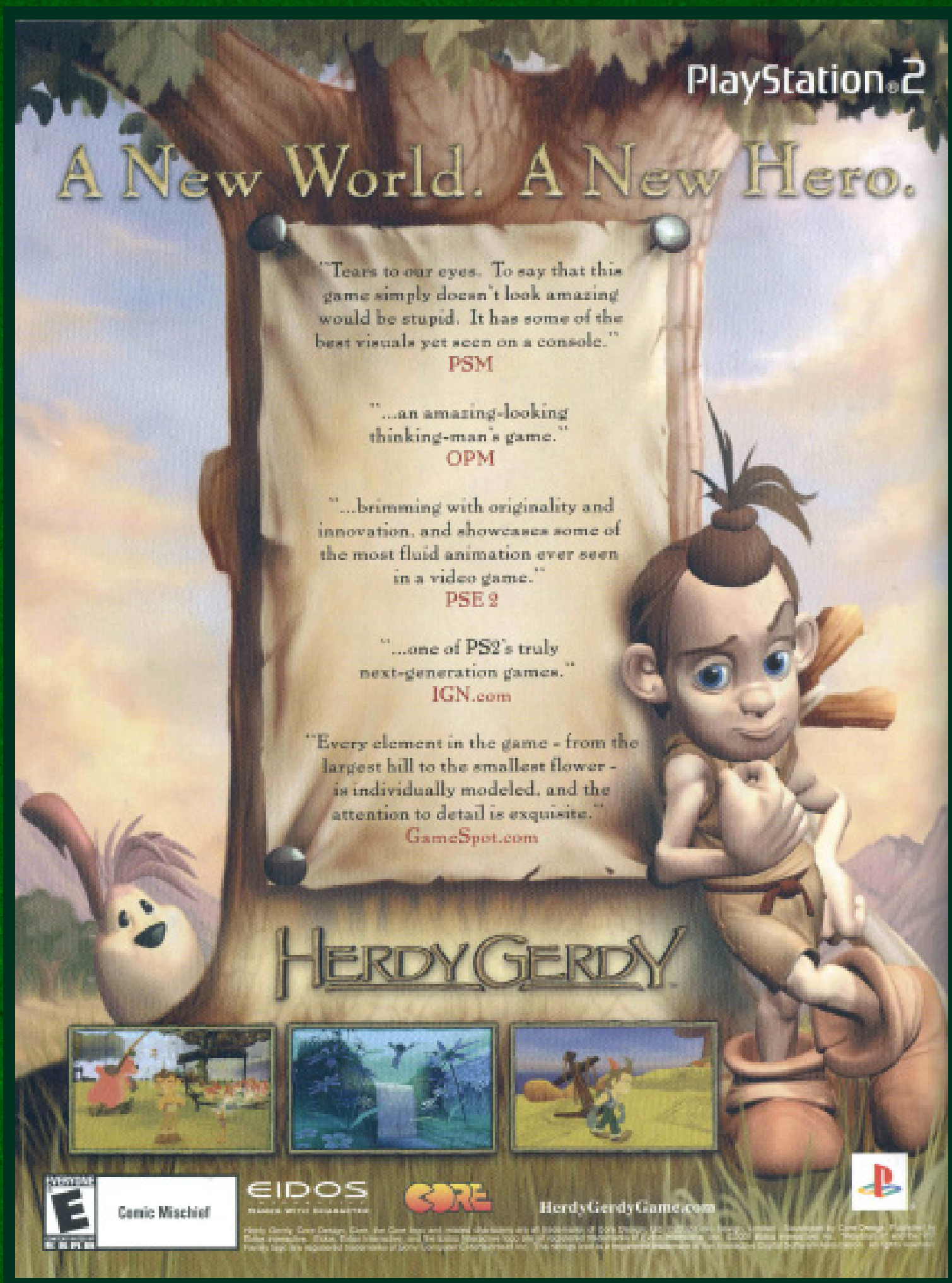
The player must herd enough creatures into their pens to unlock areas and new levels. However, the various creatures have certain reactions and skills; some swim while some drown, for example. The levels themselves are difficult to negotiate, with pirate ships, winding caverns, and ruins blocking Gerdy's path. It has a large environment (around 40 different areas) as well as 12 different fictional creatures to herd into their different pens. The game requires strategic thinking as some animals eat the others, some animals cannot jump, some cannot swim and each animal kind requires a separate herding technique. The head-up display is relatively simple: there are three colored displays at the top of the screen. To the left, the display shows the number of dead animals. The next, in the centre of the screen, represents those alive and free, and the display on the right shows those that have been captured. At the bottom of the screen is a progress bar with dots: each dot confirms that players have captured 5% of the animals in the level. Finally, the map shows the player's position, animals, pens, rainbow buttons, and the gypsy at the end of the level.

The game is plagued by automatic camera problems. Although the game features manual camera control, when the view between Gerdy and the camera is obstructed control reverts to automatic often to the chagrin of the player. The creatures are controlled by a complex but flawed AI. They are prone to getting stuck, sometimes irretrievably, on objects in the environment owing to a lack of adequate collision detection.

Herdy Gerdy received mixed to positive reviews from critics. It has an aggregate score of 69.93% on GameRankings and 69/100 on Metacritic.






PlayStation®2
A New World. A New Hero.
"Tears to our eyes. To say that this game simply doesn't look amazing would be stupid. It has some of the best visuals yet seen on a console."
PSM
"...an amazing-looking thinking-man's game."
OPM
"...brimming with originality and innovation, and showcases some of the most fluid animation ever seen in a video game."
PSE 2
"...one of PS2's truly next-generation games."
IGN.com
"Every element in the game - from the largest hill to the smallest flower - is individually modeled, and the attention to detail is exquisite."
GameSpot.com
HERDY GERDY
Comic Mischief
EIDOS
CORE
HerdyGerdyGame.com

Hermina to Culus

7.6

J

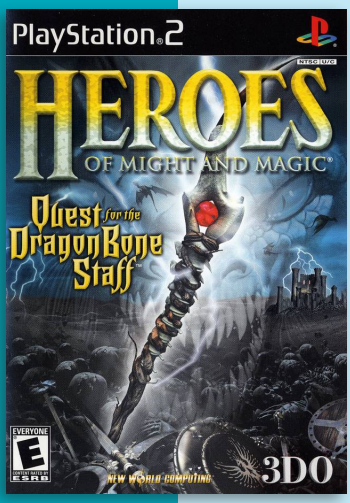
Developer	Gust
Publisher	Gust
Release date	(jp) December 20, 2001
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

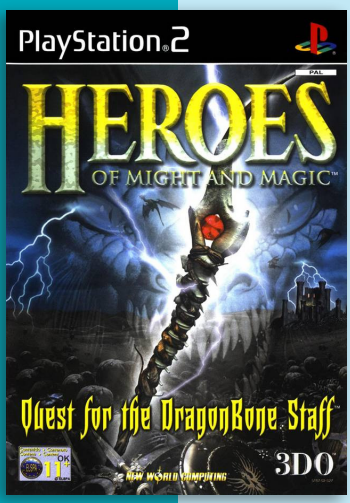
Hermina and Culus: Atelier Lilie Another Story is a side game for the Salburg series.

In the game, the young alchemist Hermina has created an homunculus by the name Culus. The homunculus cannot show many expression or say many words, but Culus learns new words from the people of Salburg. Eventually the player can use the words Culus have learnt to become Hermina's friend.

Heroes of Might and Magic: Quest for the Dragon Bone Staff

6.4





Developer	New World Computing
Publisher	3DO
Release date	(us) April 18, 2001
Genre	Turn-based strategy
Mode	1 Player

Heroes of Might and Magic: Quest for the Dragon Bone Staff is a turn-based strategy released on the PS2. Though 3DO did not advertise it as such, the game is an enhanced remake of King's Bounty. It is primarily a graphics enhancement and it appears that little of the text has changed. Because of its dated gameplay, the game bears little relation to the rest of the Heroes of Might and Magic series.

Quest for the DragonBone Staff primarily involves tactics-style gameplay assembling groups of creatures together into an army that is positioned on a grid-based field of combat. A simplified engine drives a basic comparison of attacker to defender strength with the number of troops decreasing as "damage." The player is charged with the task of moving around on a overworld map in real time, assembling armies via spawn points and laying siege to various castles to reclaim pieces of a treasure map.

The number of armies the player can control at a time is regulated via cost both initial and with monthly upkeep, and a leadership value which the player increases over time with found rewards on the overworld map.

N P

Heroes of the Pacific

7.6

Developer	IR Gurus
Publisher	Codemasters, (us) Ubisoft
Release date	(eu) September 23, 2005
Genre	Simulation, Shooter
Mode	1-2 (8) Players

Heroes of the Pacific is an aerial combat simulator game set in the Pacific Theater of Operations during World War II.

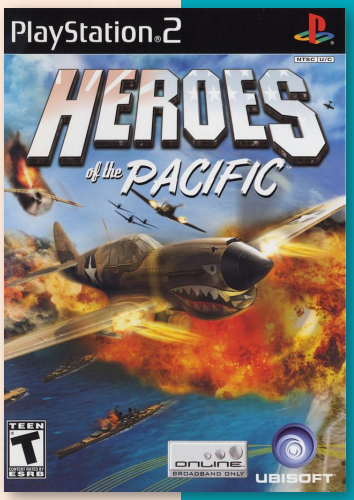
Players assume the role of a combat pilot named William Crowe as he experiences the various phases of the Pacific War with Japan, beginning with the Pearl Harbor attack. There are six game modes: Campaign, Instant Action, Single Mission, Historical, Training, and Multiplayer. One or two players can play simultaneously.

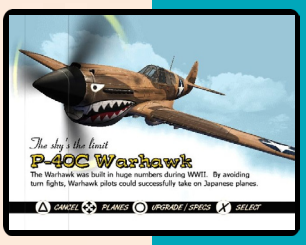
There are two different control schemes for flying the planes, Arcade and Professional. The Arcade control scheme allows for easier control of the plane via a single joystick with automatic rudders, while the Professional controls offer separate control of the pitch, roll and yaw of the plane.

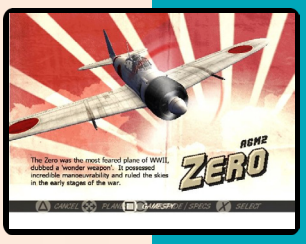
Heroes of the Pacific also offers multiple difficulty levels: Rookie, Pilot, Veteran, and Ace. Completing missions on higher difficulty unlocks more planes and rewards the player with more upgrade points, which can be used to upgrade your unlocked aircraft after missions are accomplished.

This simulation also allows players to pilot famous planes such as the P-40 Warhawk, P-51 Mustang, F4U Corsair, P-47 Thunderbolt and a number of Japanese and German planes from World War II, including several experimental planes, such as the Blohm & Voss BV P.215 and the J7W Shinden. vTen campaigns, with 26 missions taken from real events of the Pacific campaign. While some of the missions in Heroes of the Pacific require specific planes (such as the PBY Catalina), the player can usually choose which plane to fly from the allowable classes for each mission (Fighter, Dive Bombers, Torpedo Bombers, Bombers).

Heroes of the Pacific was developed by Melbourne development company Thatgame, who merged with IR Gurus shortly after the release of the game. In 2008, IR Gurus was renamed Transmission Games. Many of the members of the development team previously worked together at Melbourne House, on titles such as Test Drive: Le Mans, Grand Prix Challenge, and KKnD2: Krossfire.

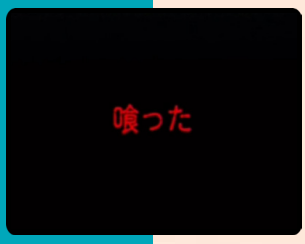






8.3

Higanbana



J

Developer	Sammy Entertainment Inc.
Publisher	Sammy Studios
Release date	(jp) December 26, 2002
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

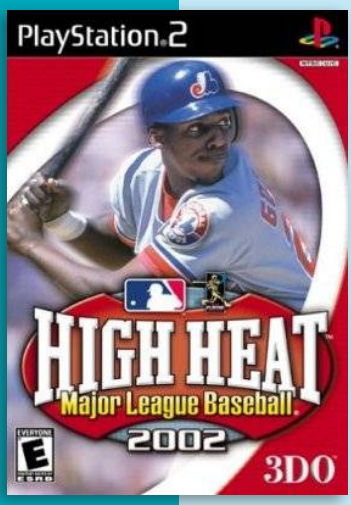
Higanbana is a sound novel developed by Sammy for the PlayStation 2. The game is based on the novel of the same title by Japanese author Shukei Nagasaka. The game let the player at the begining of the game to chose between three different characters and features several different endings depending of the player choices during the game. In the game the three main characters (female college students) receive tickets to go to Kyoto where they will face dangers and horrors.

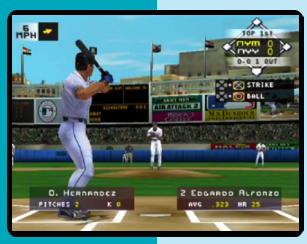
One of the special features of the game is the zapping points in which players can choose their partner for that part. The zapping points are shown in screen with a blue circle and can be accessed pressing the triangle button, the green points can be passed pressing the X button.

"psxdatacenter.com"

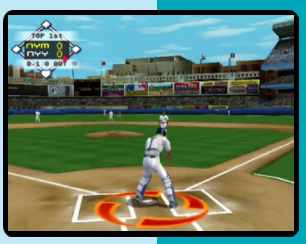
High Heat Major League Baseball 2002

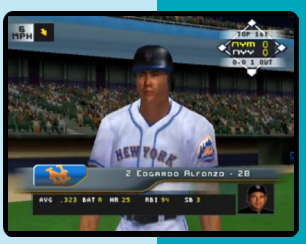
7.6





Developer	3DO
Publisher	3DO
Release date	(us) March 26, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players





This was 3DO's 2001 entry into their High Heat Major League Baseball series. The game feature the official licensed team and player names from all 30 MLB teams.

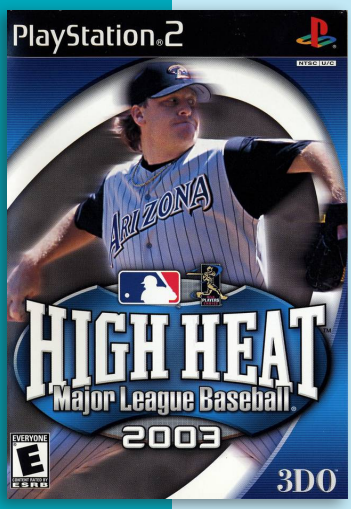
In the game, players can just manage their team or go on the field and play each game. Players can also configure the game in many different formats. Players can lengthen or Shorten a season, create new teams, re-arrange the divisons, move players from different teams before the game starts, change team settings and create custom made players.

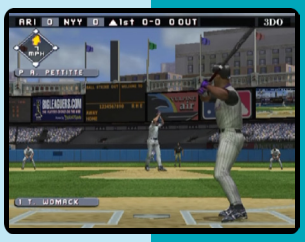
The High Heat series was traditionally known for possessing more simulation-style qualities than competitors World Series Baseball, All Star Baseball, or Triple Play Baseball, but frequently lagged behind in graphical quality.

N

High Heat Major League Baseball 2003

8.4





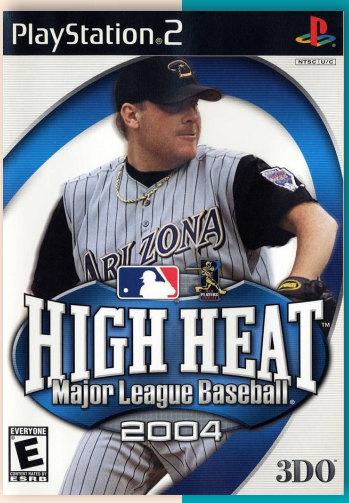
Developer	3DO
Publisher	3DO, (jp) Takara
Release date	(us) February 9, 2002
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

The High Heat 2003 edition feature the following updates: Improved Truplay AI technology, allowing more true to life animations for batter, fielders and pitchers, etc. All the updated team rosters for the new season. Two man commentary team. On field coaches and managers. And new gameplay modes including home run derby, fantasy draft, create-a-player, batting practice, and a two on two challenge.

"mobygames.com"

High Heat Major League Baseball 2004

8.3



Developer	3DO
Publisher	3DO
Release date	(eu) February 20, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

The 2004 edition feature improved graphics. The game also feature new career and franchise modes so players can manage their own team and build up multi-year stats for it. Recruit from all the minor leagues (A through AAA) to help the team become the best.

Players can play the 2-on-2 Showdown and select a pitcher and batter to compete against another pitcher and batter. Also, the game feature a more realistic audio environment featuring people yelling and cheering, and vendors selling hot dogs, not to mention the return of the two-man announcer team.

Players can watch player movements, including jumping and diving for the ball, sliding, and even shaking fists when hit by the ball.

"mobygames.com"

1.6

High Rollers Casino

Developer	Virtual Toys
Publisher	Mud Duck Productions
Release date	(us) November 10, 2004
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

High Rollers Casino allows players to partake in various games typically found within a casino, ranging from card to slot machines.

Upon beginning the game, the player is tasked with the creation of a character. After one is made, they are placed within the casino itself, a 3D room, and given full control of their avatar. To begin a game, the player must walk up to the respective machine or table. Alongside the games are various NPCs who can be interacted with. Certain ones carry specific benefits. For example, approaching the bartender will allow him to explain the rules of any game in the casino, as well as provide tutorials on how they play. If the player goes bankrupt during their gambling, they can visit the cashier, who will purchase prizes won during games from your character. As more winnings are collected, the player's status within the casino increases, ranging from silver to platinum. This unlocks bonuses within the game.

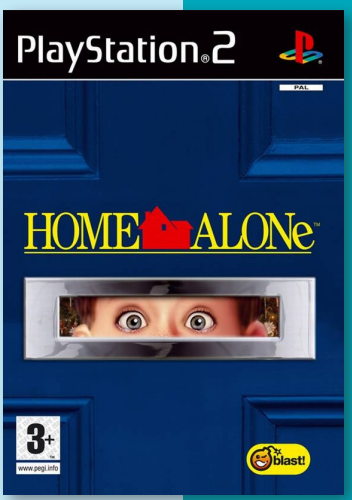
At the character creation screen, creating a female and inputting the name "SAM" will unlock all in game bonuses.

High Rollers Casino was generally ignored by critics not receiving the minimum requirement of four reviews for Metacritic to assign a score.

2.5

Home Alone

Developer	Coyote Console
Publisher	Blast! Entertainment Ltd
Release date	(eu) November 29, 2006
Genre	Action
Mode	1-2 Players

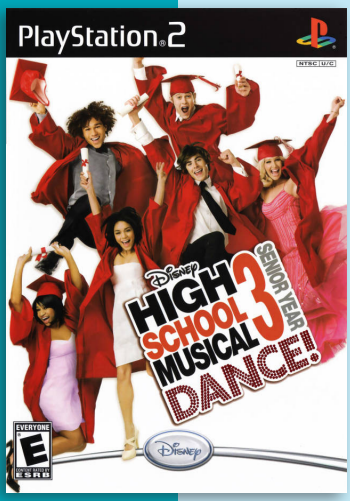


The game is "based" on the film of the same name and its sequels. The aim of the game is to go through five areas and dispose of the burglars while locking all the doors and windows to stop more getting in. The player is able to collect and use tools to close the entrances, and traps to catch the burglars. Unless the player locks all the entrances on the level, however, defeating a burglar simply means another takes his place.

"strategywiki.org"

High School Musical 3: Senior Year DANCE!

6.5



Developer	Page 44 Studios
Publisher	Disney Interactive Studios
Release date	(us) October 28, 2008
Genre	Music
Mode	1-2 Players

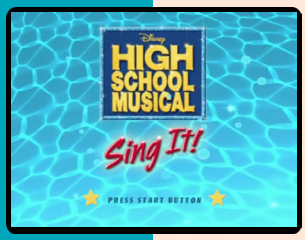
High School Musical 3: Senior Year Dance is a rhythm game based on the film of the same name. Players can choose to be one of the characters from the film (Chad, Gabriella, Kels, Ryan, Sharpay, Taylor or Troy) or create a new, customized Wildcat. It features several environments and songs from the three films. Gameplay is presented as a series of dance-offs where small orbs floating in one of four directions need to be timed correctly when they pass a threshold to keep the dance and the song going.

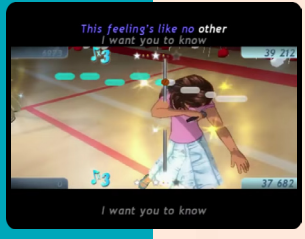
Next to the single-player mode there is a head-to-head competitive dance mode. Sometimes quick mini-games break out in the middle of songs and special effects can be activated while dancing. By learning dance moves from the characters additional songs, clothing and characters can be unlocked.

N P

High School Musical: Sing It!

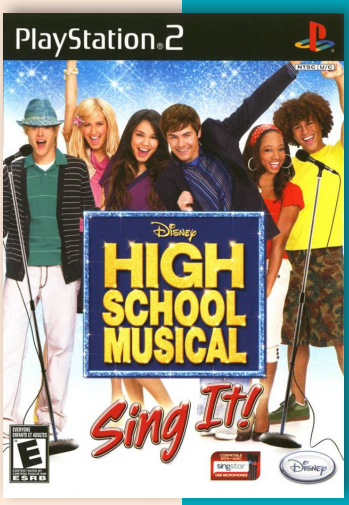
5.6





N P

Developer	Artificial Mind and Movement
Publisher	Disney Interactive Studios
Release date	(us) October 30, 2007
Genre	Music
Mode	1-8 Players



High School Musical: Sing It! is a karaoke game based on the 2006 TV movie High School Musical and its 2007 sequel High School Musical 2.

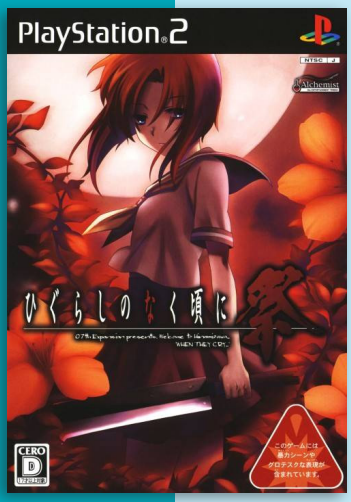
The characters of Troy, Gabriella, Chad, Taylor, Ryan, and Sharpay are available to the player, alongside an option to create their own character. The visuals of the game are animated and based on motion capture.

There are 30 songs in total, which can be sung solo or in duet. While singing, the performance is tracked on the screen. 12 different locations from the films are featured, with avatars performing, while the lyrics as well as the length of the words, represented by bars, are shown. Progressing through the game awards the player with new songs, locations, outfits and characters.

"mobygames.com"

8.1

Higurashi no Naku Koro ni Matsuri



First Print Limited Edition

J

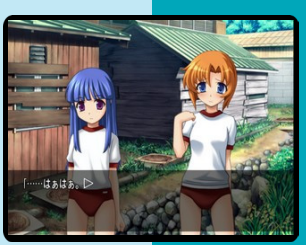
Developer	Alchemist
Publisher	Alchemist
Release date	(jp) February 22, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Higurashi no Naku Koro ni Matsuri is part of the Higurashi: When They Cry, known simply as When They Cry for the North American release, series of Japanese murder mystery dōjin soft sound novel.

Higurashi: When They Cry takes place during June 1983 in a fictional rural village called Hinamizawa (based on the village of Shirakawa, Gifu, a World Heritage Site), which has a population of approximately 2,000. The main character, Keiichi Maebara, moves to Hinamizawa and befriends his new classmates Rena Ryugu, Mion Sonozaki, Rika Furude, and Satoko Hojo. Keiichi joins their after-school club activities, which consist mostly of card and board games. Hinamizawa appears to be a normal, peaceful, rural village to Keiichi. However, the tranquility abruptly ends after the annual Watanagashi Festival, a celebration to commemorate and give thanks to the local god, Oyashiro. Keiichi learns that every year for the past four years, one person has been murdered, and another has gone missing on the evening of the Watanagashi Festival. Keiichi himself soon becomes drawn into the strange events surrounding the Watanagashi Festival and Oyashiro. In each story arc, he or one of his friends becomes paranoid and a crime is committed. Usually, the crime involves the murder of one of their own friends.

The port differs from the original game series in that it includes full voice acting, redrawn CGs, and integration of the question arcs starring Keiichi into a single branching storyline. Matsuri includes the first seven PC arcs (Matsuribayashi-hen is excluded) and three original final arcs—Taraimawashi-hen, Tsukiotoshi-hen and Miotsukushi-hen. After the original seven arcs are cleared, the first two final arcs become available. Furthermore, when these two final arcs are cleared, the epilogue, Miotsukushi-hen, is unlocked.

Higurashi no Naku Koro ni Matsuri has sold over 140,000 copies to date, and has received a total review score of 31/40 from Famitsu.



Higurashi no Naku Koro ni Matsuri: Kakera Asobi

8.1

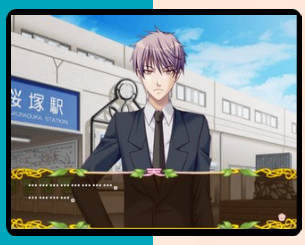
Developer	07th Expansion
Publisher	Alchemist
Release date	(jp) December 20, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Due to the popularity of Matsuri, a second enhanced PlayStation 2 port, known as Higurashi no Naku Koro ni Matsuri: Kakera Asobi, was released. It was sold as an append disc to the original Matsuri and as a standalone game. It contains all of Matsuri's content, in addition to Matsuribayashi-hen from the original games and other bonus content.

J

Himehibi: New Princess Days!! Zoku! Ni-Gakki

8.0



Developer	Takuyo
Publisher	Takuyo
Release date	(jp) June 25, 2009
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The game is a Takuyo developed visual novel. The game revolves around Nanami. She doesnt't have parents and is living with her older brother. She have changed schools many times because of the brother's job. The game start with her beginning at yet another new school.

J

HimeHibi: Princess Days

8.0

Developer	Takuyo
Publisher	Takuyo
Release date	(jp) July 6, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The story is about Aizaki Koi who finds out that she has a grandfather who is the principal of an all boys school. Since her parents are abroad in some foreign country she is told to transfer to this school, making it a co-ed school. But since she is the first female there, she becomes a sort of idol. Players have to play mini games to "earn fans" and do "fanservice" for them.

"breadmasterlee.com"

J

8.0

Hiiro no Kakera

J

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) July 6, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

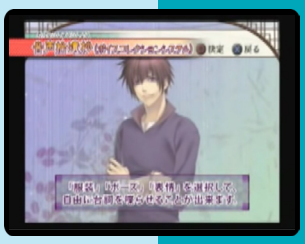
Hiiro no Kakera (lit. “Scarlet Fragments”), is a Japanese visual novel directed at the female market and known as an otome game.

The protagonist is a teenage girl who revisits a small village she remembers from her childhood and gets caught up in her family’s history and supernatural dangers surrounding it.

Hiiro no Kakera: Ano Sora no Shita de

Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) February 15, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Kono Hareta Sora no Shita de (lit. “Under the Blue Sky”) is a Japanese-style sci-fi visual novel. The player takes the part of insurance investigator Reiichi Kuroha, who along with his partner and a representative from Biowell, must investigate the circumstances surrounding the mysterious Mimic suicide.



J

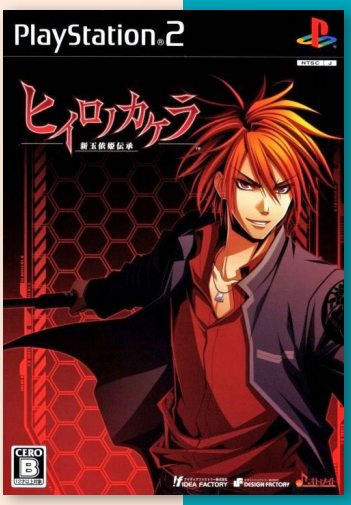
8.0

Hiiro no Kakera: Shin Tamayori Hime Denshou

J

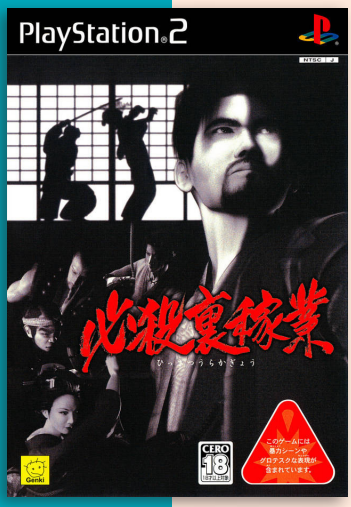
Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) October 1, 2009
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The game is set sometime in the distant future. A girl named Saya is told by her guardian Honami not to tell anyone about her hidden powers. Now 10 years later, Saya is living on her own and attending high school until one day a new transfer student, Onizaki Touma, comes to her class. After that people start getting murdered left and right and Saya starts getting massive migraines from her powers.



Hissatsu Ura-Kagyou

6.3



Developer	Light Weight
Publisher	Genki
Release date	(jp) September 22, 2005
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

Hissatsu Ura-Kagyou was developed by Tomoharu Kimura, the producer of the PS2 Kengo games.

Players take the role of the doctor, Tatewaki Kyoujiro, who doubles as a vigilante assassin in Edo. Players must gather information on the targets, and then sneak in during the night to eliminate them.

J

Hisui no Shizuku: Hiiro no Kakera 2

5.0

J

Developer	Design Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) August 9, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Hisui no Shizuku: Hiiro no Kakera 2 is the sequel to Hiiro no Kakera, though despite the minor parallels between the roles of the protagonist, the story takes place in a completely different setting with a new cast. It is a visual novel targeted at a female audience, allowing the player to choose between the seven eligible bachelors by making choices throughout the story.

Players take the role of Suzu Takachiho, the daughter of the Tamayorihime. She is a princess with the sole purpose of sealing away a dangerous artifact of the gods, the Onikirimaru. Suzu's close cousin and sister figure, Mao Yasaka, is next in line to succeed her mother as Tamayorihime and keep the seal on the Onikirimaru in place, protecting the land from the wrath of the gods. All is well until Mao mysteriously disappears, bringing Suzu back to her bloodline and forcing her to take on the role of Tamayorihime in her cousin's place. Suzu must now seal away the Onikirimaru once again, all while attempting to uncover the mystery behind Mao's disappearance and its ties to a dangerous woman known only as the Toyotamahime. Fortunately, she has the aid of her guardians, six young men who have taken an oath to protect the Tamayorihime from any danger she may face.

Limited Edition

Hissatsu Pachi-Slot Evolution: Ninja Hattori-Kun V

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) December 22, 2005
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game is a Ninja Kattori-kun-based pachi-slot game.

Hissatsu Pachinko Evolution 2: Osomatsu-Kun

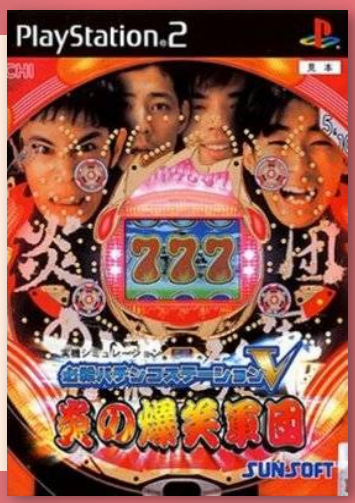
6.5

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) March 2, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game is an Osomatsu-kun pachinko game.

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V: Honoo no Bakushougun

8.0



Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) June 7, 2001
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game feature pachinko halls with customers, machines, etc.

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V2

7.0

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) July 12, 2001
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The second Hissatsu Pachinko game on PS2.

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V3

6.0

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) April 25, 2002
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

Hissatsu Pachinko Station Now 3 is the third in a series of pachinko games from Japan.

J

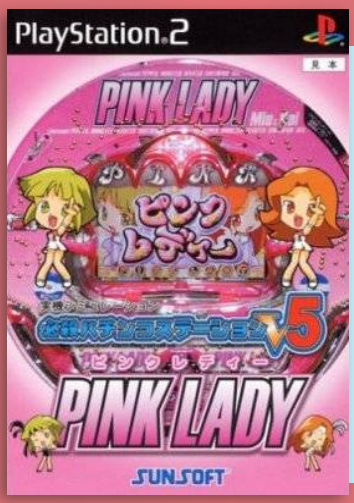
6.0

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V4

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) August 22, 2002
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The fourth in the series feature a new “Quest mode” that players can participate in. Players will have to clear the various missions issued for each stage to complete stages.

J



Hissatsu Pachinko Station V5

7.0

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) October 31, 2002
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V5: Pink Lady is the fifth PS2 Hissatsu Pachinko game.

J

5.0

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V6

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) December 5, 2002
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The sixth volume is feature the side scroll 5 lines “CR Yume no super limited” series. Players can change different settings, like big hit probability change, nail adjustment, etc.

J

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V7

7.0

J

Developer SunSoft
Publisher SunSoft
Release date (jp) May 22, 2003
Genre Gambling
Mode 1 Player

The seventh in the series.

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V8

6.0

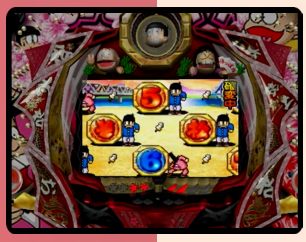
J

Developer SunSoft
Publisher SunSoft
Release date (jp) November 20, 2003
Genre Gambling
Mode 1 Player

The game is based on the “CR Ninja Hattori-kun” series.

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V9

7.0



J

Developer SunSoft
Publisher SunSoft
Release date (jp) October 28, 2004
Genre Gambling
Mode 1 Player

This was the first Osomatsu pachinko game for PlayStation 2

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V10

7.0

J

Developer SunSoft
Publisher SunSoft
Release date (jp) March 17, 2005
Genre Gambling
Mode 1 Player

The game features 3 different pachinko machines and 2 versions of each machine.

Hissatsu Pachinko Station V11

5.0

Developer	SunSoft
Publisher	SunSoft
Release date	(jp) September 29, 2005
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The eleventh of "Hissatsu Pachinko Station V" series feature the arcade machine based on the "CR Guratos" series tied up with anime character.

J

J

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 2: Bomber Powerful & Yume Yume World DX

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) January 12, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

This was the second in this series is based on two real-life pachi-slot machines.

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 3: CR Marilyn Monroe

8.0

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) February 23, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game is based on the pachinko machine "CR Marilyn Monroe" with a Marilyn Monroe theme.

J

7.0

J

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 4: CR Ashita Gaarusa Yoshimoto World

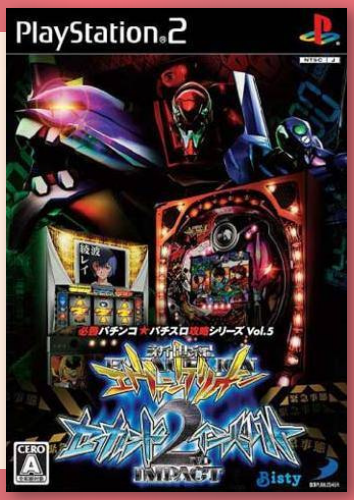
Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) May 25, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game is based on the Japanese performers, Yoshimoto All Stars.

4.0

J

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Vol. 5: Evangelion



Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) June 8, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game simulates two machines based around Neon Genesis Evangelion.

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 6: 7Cafe Keishikina Bomber Powerful 2

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) August 3, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game simulates the pachislot machine “7 cafe”.

J

J

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series: CR Fever Powerful Zero

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) October 26, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game simulates the “CR Fever powerful ZERO” machine. And feature several new functions from the original machine.

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 8: CR Matsura Aya

8.0

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) November 30, 2006
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game simulates the “CR Matsuura Aya” machine.

J

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 9: CR Fever Captain Harlock

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) March 8, 2007
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game feature the standard gameplay modes and settings, like player's probability, jackpot probability, etc.

4.0

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 10: CR Shinseiki Evangelion: Kiseki no Kachi

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) June 7, 2007
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The theme of the machine is based on the Neon Genesis anime.

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryoku Series Vol. 11: Shinseiki Evangelion - Magokoro o, Kimi ni

4.0

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) September 27, 2007
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

Apart from the regular pachinko gameplay, it also feature a small lottery and bonus lottery function.

4.0

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryaku Series Vol. 12: CR Shinseiki Evangelion - Shito, Futatabi

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) June 26, 2008
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game simulates the CR Shinseiki Evangelion - Shito, Futatabi pachinko machine.

J

Hisshou Pachinko*Pachi-Slot Kouryaku Series Vol. 13: Shinseiki Evangelion - Yakusoku no Toki

Developer	D3Publisher
Publisher	D3Publisher
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2008
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game is another pachinko-sim based around the Neon Genesis franchise.

Hokkahoka Sentou

7.6

Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo
Release date	(jp) July 25, 2002
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1-2 Players

The game is a pachinko simulator for one or two players.

J

J

Honkakuteki Pachinko Jikki Kouryaku Series: Milky Bar and Kirakuin

Developer	Unbalance
Publisher	Unbalance
Release date	(jp) July 19, 2001
Genre	Gambling
Mode	1 Player

The game simulates the two machines; “Milky bar” and “Killer Queen”.

Hokenshitsu e Youkoso

8.0

Developer	Princess Soft
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) November 30, 2006
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Hokenshitsu e Youkoso is a visual novel by Princess Soft. After getting lost in the mountains during the summer break and being absent on the start of the new semester the protagonist suddenly gets chosen for the school health comission. After meeting the new school doctor, Dr. Marina, the protagonist gradually becomes friends with her.

"psxdatacenter.com"

J

Home Maid: Owari no Tachi

6.0

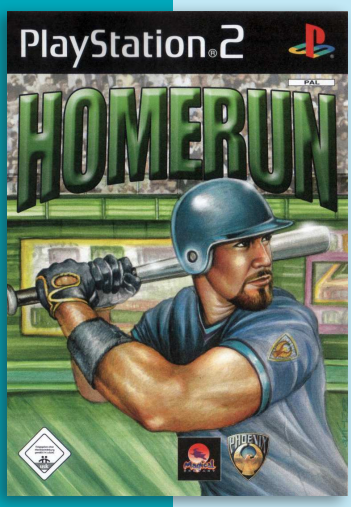
J

Developer	Princess Soft
Publisher	Princess Soft
Release date	(jp) June 2, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Home Maid: Owari no Tachi takes place at an academy situated in former Japanese territory (now British). The academy is an educational institution promoting special training for maids and their masters so they can form a proper master/servant bond. The protagonist is a young man aiming succeed his grand-father's prestigious title.

Homerun

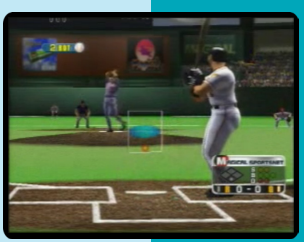
6.5



Developer	Magical Company (Mahou)
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 Players

Homerun is a two player arcade-style baseball game. The game is an European port of the Japanese release, Magical Sports 2001 Pro Yakyuu.

The game is a Phoenix Games release, and as such, it contains certain errors and missing features, such as errors (a baseball term) and the mistakes in leaderboards (best ERA is really most homeruns and vice versa).



P

THE ART OF AN ASSASSIN
THE SPEARED LEG
Blood type "A" on wooden floor.
Specialist equipment: Crossbow
Produced in China 2002.
Donated by: Masahiro Haiamoto
PC CD-ROM
PlayStation 2
XBOX
HITMAN 2
SILENT ASSASSIN
IO Interactive
EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
© 2002 IO Interactive. Hitman2 : Silent Assassin is a trademark of Eidos Interactive. Eidos, Eidos Interactive, and the Eidos Interactive logo are registered trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved. IO Interactive logo are trademarks of IO Interactive.

Hitman 2: Silent Assassin

8.5

Developer	Io Interactive
Publisher	Eidos Interactive
Release date	(us) October 1, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure, Stealth
Mode	1 Player

Hitman 2: Silent Assassin is a stealth game released on Windows, PS2, Xbox and GameCube. It is the second installment in the Hitman series and the sequel to Hitman: Codename 47.

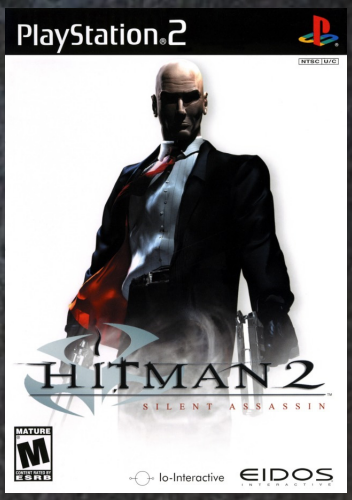
The player takes the place of a bald assassin named 47 after he killed his creator, Dr. Otto Wolfgang Ort-Meyer, and retires to a small church in Sicily.

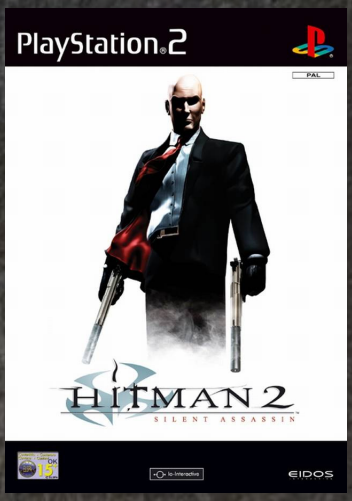
Hitman 2 features mission-based gameplay. On each level, 47 is given a set of objectives to complete. Most levels require the assassination of one or more people. How missions are completed is up to the player, and there are often a variety of ways to complete missions. Instead of running and gunning through the mission, one can set traps, like poisoning a drink, to terminate the target in silence. Some missions have assassination possibilities unique to the level.

47 can find disguises or remove them from an incapacitated person to blend in with his surroundings and access restricted areas. This plays in with the "suspicion" system; a bar beside the health meter on the HUD represents how much suspicion 47 garners. There are multiple ways to blend in more effectively; for example, the player can make sure to carry an AK-47 assault rifle while disguised as a Russian soldier. Despite the usage of a uniform, being nearer to fellow guards will increase the suspicion as they would have an opportunity to more closely examine 47. Running, climbing and being in restricted places are other ways to garner concern.

47's cover can be blown if suspicion gets too high, and the disguise will no longer be of any use. It is possible to switch between multiple disguises throughout the level.

Hitman 2 uses the concept of a post-mission ranking system, in which the player is given a status based on how they completed the mission, rated along a stealthy-aggressive axis, between "Silent Assassin", a stealthy player who manages to complete the level without being noticed and only killing two non targeting people excluding the intended target(s), and "Mass Murderer", a non-stealthy player who kills everyone. The game rewards the player for critical thinking and prob-





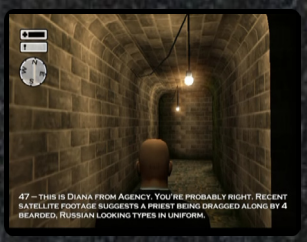
J N P

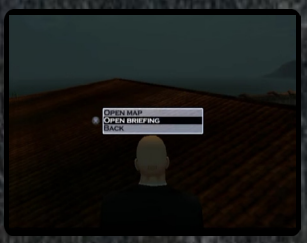
lem solving, encouraging the player not to treat the game as a simple shooter. Achieving Silent Assassin status on multiple missions rewards the player with bonus weapons. These weapons, plus items found in previous levels, can be carried over into future ones, allowing for differing means of accomplishing the tasks. Big weapons like rifles and shotguns cannot be concealed, thus the player has to either be wearing an appropriate disguise to match the weapon, or make sure no one sees the player use it.

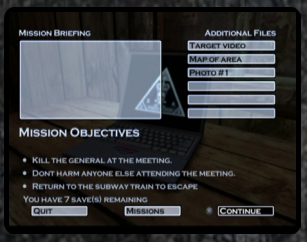
One of the major complaints critics made about the first game was that it was inaccessible to most players due to its unfriendly nature. Despite the problems with the first game, it did show potential for the underlying technology and gameplay. Improvements were made to the game's AI and the new levels were made smaller and more focused. Additional items would be available in the second installment including chloroform for quietly taking down enemies and a crossbow which could silently kill opponents. The initial story for the game would take place after the events of the first game. After hearing the changes planned for Hitman 2, PC Gamer declared in December 2001 that *"Hitman 2 should be everything we wished of its predecessor – and that gives us extremely high hopes."*

Hitman 2: Silent Assassin received positive reviews. GameRankings and Metacritic gave the game 85.02% and 85/100. GameSpot gave it a score of 8.6/10, saying that it *"fixes virtually all of the problems of its predecessor"* and is still an *"outstanding"* game.

Hitman 2 was nominated for Computer Gaming World's 2002 "Action Game of the Year" award, which ultimately went to Medal of Honor: Allied Assault. The editors wrote, *"Hitman 2 is a huge improvement over the original, and it's one of the best games of last year in any genre."*







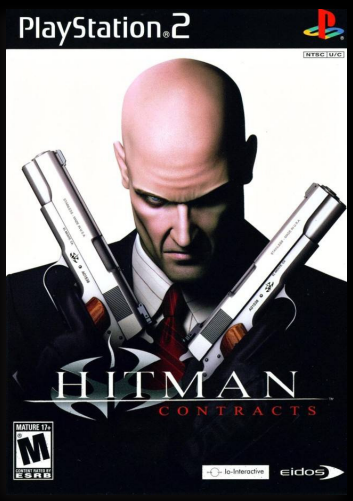
Hitman 2 has sold more than 3.7 million copies as of 23 April 2009. By July 2006, the PS2 version had sold 1.1 million copies and earned $39 million in the United States. Next Generation ranked it as the 47th highest-selling game launched for the PlayStation 2, Xbox or GameCube between January 2000 and July 2006 in that country. Combined console sales of Hitman games released in the 2000s reached 2 million units in the United States by July 2006. ELSPA gave the game's PS2 release a "Platinum" certification, for sales of at least 300,000 copies in the region.

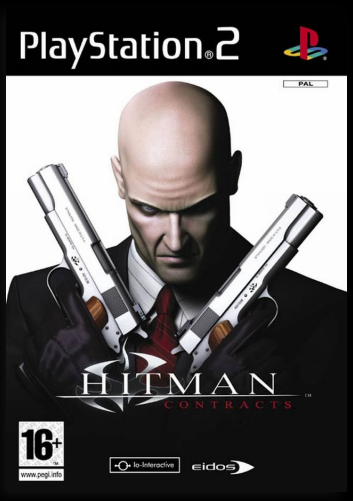
The game's release sparked controversy due to a level featuring the killing of Sikhs within a depiction of their most holy site, the Harmandir Sahib, where hundreds of Sikhs were massacred in 1984. An altered version of Silent Assassin was eventually released on all the platforms with the related material removed from the game, however, the DRM-free version available on GOG.com is completely uncensored and patched to 1.01.

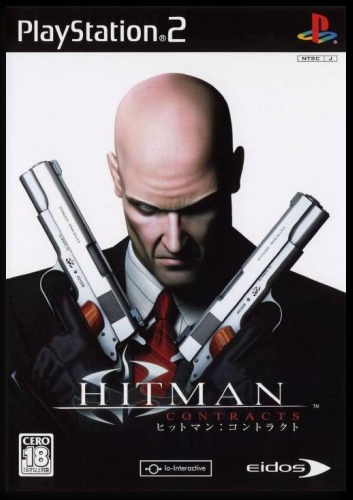
Censored versions (patched beyond v1.01. including Steam release) retain all three Sikh levels; however references to Gurdwara location have been removed, as well as dialogue referring to Sikhs as "towelheads" has been removed. Temple City level female patrols and alcohol bottles have been removed and posters around the level now show the face of the cult leader instead of Shiva.

THE ART OF AN ASSASSIN
THE HEADSHOT
Blood type "O" on white ceramic tile.
Specialist equipment: Desert Eagle
Produced in Malaysia 2002.
Donated by: Charlie Sidjan
PC CD-ROM
PlayStation.2
MA15+
MEDIUM LEVEL ANIMATED VIOLENCE
Io-Interactive
GAMENATION
www.gamenation.com.au
HITMAN 2
SILENT ASSASSIN
EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
© 2002 IO Interactive. Hitman2 : Silent Assassin is a trademark of Eidos Interactive. Eidos, Eidos Interactive, and the Eidos Interactive logo are registered trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved. IO interactive logo are trademarks of IO interactive.
Microsoft, Xbox, the Xbox logos, are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. © 2002 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Published under licence by Eidos Interactive Ltd. 2002. " " and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.

8.0







Hitman: Contracts

Developer	Io Interactive
Publisher	Eidos Interactive, (us) Square Enix
Release date	(us) April 20, 2004
Genre	Action-adventure, Stealth
Mode	1 Player

Hitman: Contracts is the third installment in the Hitman video game series. It is mostly a remake of the first title of the franchise, Hitman: Codename 47.

Although not a direct follow-up of Codename 47, it does fill in some of the gaps in the Hitman story-line following the end of Codename 47, as well as most of the said game's being remastered and incorporated into the game.

In Hitman: Contracts, gameplay centers around the exploits of a Agent 47, as he is sent to various locations to assassinate targets. An array of weapons can be used, from kitchen knives to belt-fed machine guns. While stealth and subterfuge is encouraged, the game allows the player to take a more violent approach and gunfight their way to their mission goals. As players progress through the game, they can collect the various armaments found in the levels, allowing them to be used in future missions. Aside from the more straightforward ways of killing targets such as gunplay and strangulation, several missions allow the player more subtle ways to eliminate hits, such as judicious use of poison, or arranging "accidents" like a heat-induced heart attack inside a sauna.

Players are rated on their performance based on several factors; key among which are the number of shots fired, NPCs killed (and whether they were armed adversaries or innocents), and the number of times the guards are alerted. The lowest rank is "Mass Murderer", which is awarded to players who kill large numbers of NPCs in the pursuit of their target and do not use stealth. The highest rank is "Silent Assassin", which is earned when the player accomplishes their mission without being detected, and generally without killing anyone other than the intended target(s).

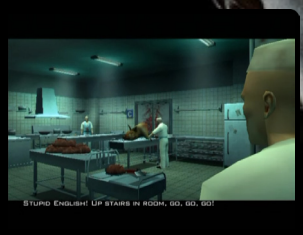
Contracts continues the trend of context sensitive actions, which means that one button is used in multiple situations for multiple uses. For example, when the player is near a door, the context sensitive button will allow the player to perform door-relevant actions such as keyhole-peeking, lock picking, or if allowed, simply opening it. When the player is near an unconscious or dead NPC, the same button will allow the ability to either acquire the person's outfit, or drag the body to an area where it will not be found by guards.

Along with the context sensitive button, the "Suspicion Meter" returns as well; this meter informs players of how close they are to blowing their respective cover. Actions like excess running indoors, brandishing weapons openly, residing in restricted areas, or sneaking can raise suspicion. Proximity will also usually raise the meter. If the "Suspicion Meter" fills, guards will open fire on sight of the player and the current cover becomes useless. If the guards discover a fallen body, or if an unconscious person wakes and alerts them, the "Suspicion Meter" will raise much faster than it would otherwise.

Disguises can be either found in the environment or taken from the bodies of male NPCs. Depending on the disguise, the player

can then access areas restricted to most individuals in a level. These disguises can be seen through by guards, e.g. if guards in a level are all wielding shotguns, a player dressed as a guard but not similarly equipped will draw more suspicion. Also, certain behaviors (like picking locks) will cause guards to see through a disguise as well.

The soundtrack was composed by Jesper Kyd. The score features the same Latin choral arrangements as in all the other scores; however, they are heavily sampled and mixed into the dark electronic soundscape. As summed up by Kyd, *"First of all it is a much darker score. Hitman 2 was an epic story that kind of spanned all over the world. This one, although there are different locations, it's not one big epic story. It's a lot of darker, psychological small stories mixed together, so the score follows the darker aspect of Hitman and his career."* The score was awarded the title of "Best Original Music" at the 2005 BAFTA Games Awards.



The game did fairly well, but did not get as good ratings as its predecessor. IGN gave the game an 8.4, calling it a *"Moody, Dark and brilliant stealthy, Contracts doesn't raise the bar, it holds it steady"*. GameRankings gave it 79.92% and Metacritic gave the game 80 of 100. Gamespot gave the game a 7.4, commenting *"Hitman contracts delivers some time-tested and sometimes highly entertaining stealth action, which any fan of the genre might as well check out."*. Eurogamer gave the game an 8.

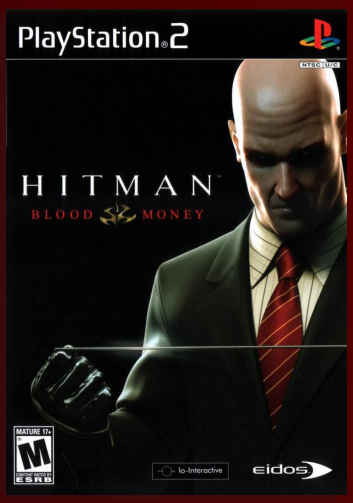
Due to licensing issues with a song featured in the game ("Immortal" by Clutch), Hitman: Contracts did not get a release on the online distribution service Steam, until 2014, despite all other Hitman games being released on the platform.

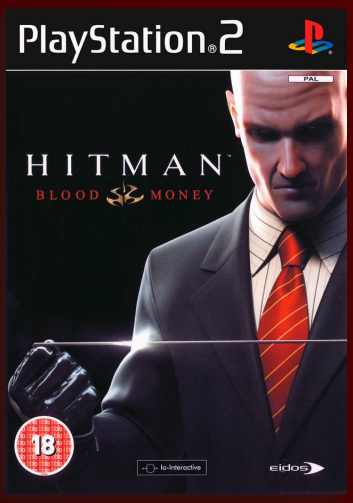
(c) 2006 IO Interactive A/S. Hitman, Hitman Blood Money, Eidos and the Eidos logo are trademarks of the SCi Entertainment Group. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The rating icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

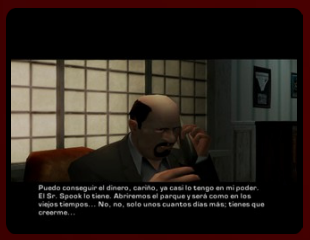
EXECUTED
SPRING 2006
HITMAN
BLOOD MONEY
www.HitmanBloodMoney.com
eidos

8.3

Hitman: Blood Money







Developer	Io Interactive
Publisher	Eidos Interactive
Release date	(eu) May 26, 2006
Genre	Action-adventure, Stealth
Mode	1 Player

Hitman: Blood Money is the fourth installment in the Hitman video game series.

The story follows the life of professional hitman, Agent 47, as narrated in cutscenes by a former Director of the FBI to a journalist who is interviewing him. The wheelchair-using ex-director Cayne recounts how his agency tracked 47 over a two-year period.

In Hitman: Blood Money, each mission is framed around the killing of one or more individuals, which the main protagonist, Agent 47, must accomplish. Standing between him and success are armed guards, security checkpoints, possible witnesses and other obstacles. The player guides 47 through the game's levels with the help of a map which can be accessed at any time. The map indicates the layout of each topographical area of the level, the whereabouts of 47's main targets, and other characters. In order to carry out his mission, 47 may use any method at his disposal to eliminate his targets, regardless of witnesses or violence done to bystanders. Beyond rewarding stealth over bloodshed as is traditional in the series, Blood Money includes features that directly penalize the player for making too much noise and/or being too violent; either toward their targets, bystanders, or both.

Many new features were introduced in Blood Money. These include the capability to climb through more obstacles, improved unarmed combat, the ability to use an NPC as a human shield with the help of a weapon (and to knock them unconscious afterwards), the ability to dispose of dead or unconscious bodies into containers, improved character animations, a new game engine, and the ability to upgrade weapons and equipment. Five of the featured weapons in the game, as well as assorted pieces of equipment such as bombs and armor, can be upgraded. Every level contains some method to make the target's death look like an accident; for example, tampering with someone's grill to make it explode when it is turned on, rigging a chandelier to fall on a target, or simply pushing the target off a balcony. There are also improvised weapons, such as nail-guns, a child's air rifle, kitchen knives, screwdrivers, stilettos, cane swords, fire extinguishers, hammers, and hedge clippers.

Also added was the "Notoriety System". If the player, during a mission, gets caught on camera surveillance or is witnessed committing murder, 47's notoriety will rise. Conversely, if the player executes the mission perfectly with none of the aforementioned events occurring, 47's notoriety will be minimal. However, if the only factor affecting 47's notoriety in a certain mission is the fact that he was recorded on CCTV, the player may enter the location in which the tape that recorded him is located, usually in disguise, and retrieve it, thus eliminating that factor; if the player retrieves the tape before being recorded, this eliminates the risk of being recorded in the first place. The higher Agent 47's notoriety is, the easier it will be for NPCs to identify him. Players may use the bribery system to negate accumu-

lated notoriety. Notoriety gained in early missions will affect later missions. Earlier missions in which 47 has gained notoriety in can be replayed to reduce notoriety in later missions. The "Notoriety System" is not enabled on "Rookie" mode, the easiest difficulty setting.

At the end of each mission, a newspaper article is displayed about the hit, in which the content varies depending on the investigation results and the player's notoriety. It will detail the weapon most frequently used, how accurately it was used, the number of police, security, and civilians killed or injured, and if there were any witnesses. Any injured people will be counted as witnesses, who affect notoriety. Sketch drawings are also sometimes visible showing Agent 47's face, which grow progressively more accurate as 47's notoriety grows. The newspaper announces in the headline how many people were killed, whereas executing the target without any problems will simply have 47 as 'wanted by police'. The article's title relates to the player's mission rating. "Silent Assassin", in which one assassinates the targets as cleanly and quietly as possible and draws no unnecessary attention to themself, is the best rating possible. On higher difficulty levels, something as simple as 47 exiting the level in a disguise rather than his original suit will adversely affect the player's notoriety, as well as deduct $5,000 from their payment for the mission. As one advances further into the game, more and more newspapers containing the headline from the last mission will be scattered around levels.

Blood Money also improved the melee weapons system, allowing the player to lethally throw certain weapons at NPCs. Once thrown into anyone, however, the weapon cannot be retrieved. There is an exception for the hammer, which can be retrieved

even though thrown into a victim. Also unlike previous games, melee weapons cannot be transferred to the player's inventory.

If 47 renders a NPC unconscious, either by using his syringe filled with sedative or knocking them out with close combat, they will not awaken for the entirety of the level until a security guard checks it, unlike previous games. In addition, if both uses of 47's sedative syringe have been used and the player does not wish to use close combat (which increases their violence rating and by extension affects their mission rating), the player may take the person they wish to sedate as a human shield and knock them out with their weapon.

47's ability to hide bodies has also been revamped. In previous games, 47 had to drag the body to a secluded area without "hiding" it, and either eliminate everyone who could possibly see the body where he left it or be quick enough to finish the mission before the next person entered. Now, 47 can dispose of unconscious or dead bodies in containers to hide them from view of guards. If the container's lid is closed, no NPCs or guards will look inside it, thus ensuring the body stays hidden and 47's cover is not blown. In addition, if 47 kills someone in an elevator by climbing through the hatch and strangling them, their body is also considered hidden, and cannot fall out of the hatch, thereby preventing it from being found. Some levels feature high level areas; it is possible to toss bodies over the side.

Blood Money introduced the concept of rival assassins to the storyline. The developers created the Mark Parchezzi character as a sort of foil to Agent 47, for he is "everything Parchezzi is not." The other "lesser" assassins were there to prove more able than "drug dealers or similar adversaries."

The Hitman: Blood Money Soundtrack, composed by Jesper Kyd, was performed jointly with the Budapest Symphony Orchestra and the Hungarian Radio Choir. It features Kyd's trademark ambience and dark, foreboding arrangements with the choral parts in deep brooding Latin.

In the composer's own words:
"It seemed like a natural choice to mix things up for the Blood Money score. After the electronic-driven score for Hitman: Codename 47, the orchestral Hitman 2: Silent Assassin score was a new direction for the sound of Hitman, although there are still a few purely electronic tracks in Hitman 2: Silent Assassin. For the third title, Hitman: Contracts, we wanted to go back to the games's roots and create an updated and more modern electronic score. So the Hitman series has a strong background in electronic music."

Hitman: Blood Money received positive reviews. GameRankings and Metacritic gave the PlayStation 2 version 82.51% and 83/100.

Many critics felt the game was an improvement over the previous Hitman titles, with Official PlayStation Magazine UK calling it "without question the best Hitman yet". Other critics shared this sentiment, despite feeling that the basic gameplay elements were similar, if not unchanged from the previous installments, with GameSpot stating that *"the underlying stealth action is mostly unchanged"* while *"a diverse sequence of imaginative scenarios gives Blood Money its own fair share of violent thrills."* GameSpy praised the expanded scope and options in each level, such as making kills appear as accidents, that *"the game features enough choices and entertaining kills to have you playing some missions more than once, striving for that exclusive Silent Assassin rating."*

While new features and additions to the series were praised, some critics felt the Notoriety system was *"underutilized"* and *"half-baked"* while others pointed issues from the previous Hitman games still being present, notably with the AI. GameTrailers found that *"some enemies behave erratically in specific situations taking you out of the experience"*. TeamXbox said they couldn't *"really see any more alertness or cleverness on the part of the CPU than in Hitman: Contracts"*.

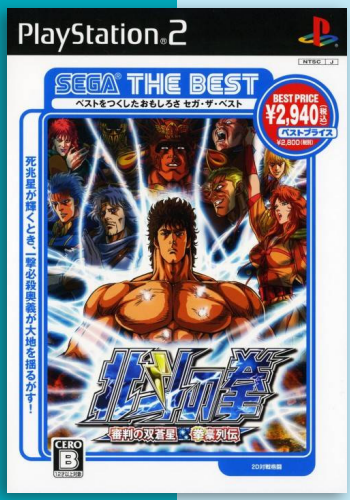
Hitman: Blood Money sold 1.5 million copies by July 17, 2006. As of 2011, the game had sold more than 2.1 million copies.

Despite the fact Blood Money had been said to be the most violent game of the series yet, the magazine ads for the game generated more controversy than the title which spawned them. The ad that drew the most attention and protest depicted a woman lying on a bed in lingerie, seemingly asleep but with a bullet hole in her forehead. The caption above the picture read: "Beautifully Executed", a pun regarding the woman's appearance and her fate. Other ads were "Classically Executed", featuring a cellist with a slit throat, "Coldly Executed", showing a man in a freezer, and "Shockingly Executed", depicting a woman in a bath who has been electrocuted by a toaster.

Hokuto no Ken

7.9

Sega the Best



J

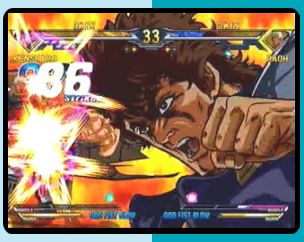
Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Sega
Release date	(jp) March 27, 2007
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Fist of the North Star (Hokuto no Ken) is a 2D competitive fighting game based on the manga series of the same name. It was originally released in 2005 as a coin-operated arcade game for the Atomiswave hardware. The PlayStation 2 port, retitled Hokuto no Ken: Shinpan no Sōsōsei Kengō Retsuden (roughly translated as Fist of the North Star: The Twin Blue Stars of Judgment - History of the Fist Masters) features a bonus DVD including an exclusive training mode ("Starter's Guide") and a documentary covering history of previous Hokuto no Ken titles for home consoles. The arcade version was officially distributed by Sega in North America, while the PS2 port was released only in Japan.

Combos, special moves, including fatal ones, are included in the complex game system, based on energy bars and on the seven stars system. When all the seven stars of a character are depleted (some moves can remove one or more star to the character's bar) he/she is exposed to fatal KO move. If that move hits the player's character, the round is lost and the next one begins with all the seven stars.

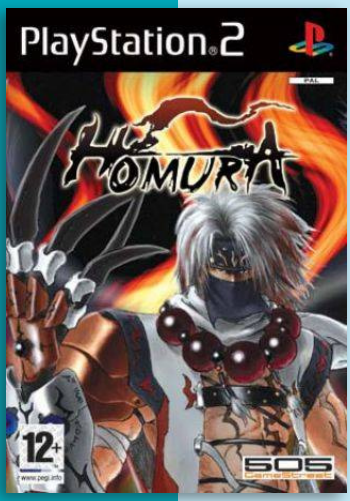
The game features a total of 10 playable characters (nine available from the beginning plus one secret character). They are Kenshiro (Hokuto), Raoh (Hokuto), Toki (Hokuto), Jagi (Hokuto), Shin (Nanto), Rei (Nanto), Thouther (Nanto), Juda (Nanto), Heart, Mamiya. As usual, each character has his own peculiar points of strength and weakness. The fighting takes place in various locations featured in the animé such as Southern Cross, Thouther's Pyramid, Ruined Cities and so on. A history mode is also available, covering the first series' storyline. A versus mode, arcade mode and a training mode are provided, too.

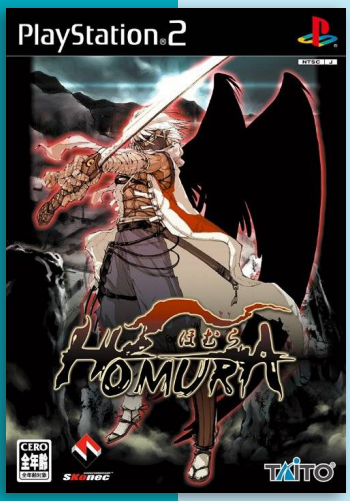
The game is based on the first half of the original manga (chapters 1-136) and uses the characters as they were depicted in the 1980s manga and in the anime series. The voices of the playable characters are all performed by the original voice actors from the anime, with the exception of Kenshiro and Rei (one was away and one was dead).



Homura

6.7





Developer	Skonec
Publisher	Taito Corporation, (eu) 505 Game Street
Release date	(jp) December 1, 2005
Genre	Shooter
Mode	1 Player

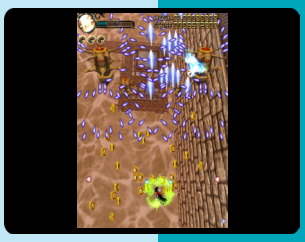
Homura is a top-down bullet-hell shoot'em up. The player takes on the role of Homura as he fights his way through 4 levels filled with demons. Each stage has a branching path where Homura can pick which route to take. The paths will meet up at the end of the stage however, so the boss fight will always be the same.

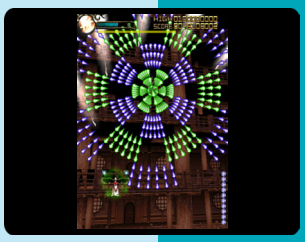
There are several ways to dispose of the enemies in the game, where the common one is a projectile attack. What sets this game apart is Homura's sword slash technique; When used it makes the enemies' bullets bounce back towards them. The more bullets are slashed at once, the higher the score multiplier will be. The sword slash has to be recharged for a few seconds each time after use. There are also powerful special attacks which will clear the screen of all enemies or do massive damage to bosses.

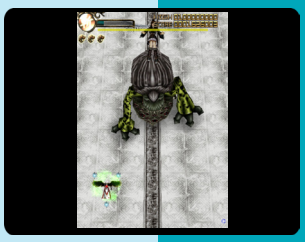
Killed enemies drop money, which is used to fill up a meter. When the meter is full, an "option" helper is added to Homura's side adding additional fire power.

The aspect ratio can be changed in the options menu in a multitude of ways, one of which means placing the screen sideways (for standing the TV on its side) to make it more similar to the original arcade cabinet's setup.

"mobygames.com"



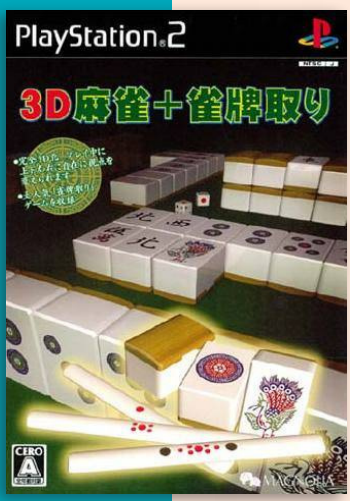




J P

Honkakuha 2000 Series: 3D Mahjong + Janpai Tori

7.0



Developer	Magnolia
Publisher	Magnolia
Release date	(jp) November 16, 2006
Genre	Board
Mode	1 Player

The game is a mahjong board game by Magnolia. Players can change the viewpoint up, down, left and right while playing. The game is also equipped with a AI for making matches more challenging. Players can also changes between the roles and rules. It also feature "Remove Sparrow" which removes the same tile.

J

7.5

Honoo no Takuhaibin

J

Developer	Success
Publisher	Success
Release date	(jp) October 19, 2006
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

Honō no Takuhaibin ("Blazing Express Delivery") is an action delivery game where the player, as Jirō, must deliver packages within a time limit, while at the same time defeating or avoiding various enemies. Jirō has access to both a hand cart and a van, which he can switch between at will, though the van cannot enter certain areas. Defeating enemies and completing deliveries will earn Delivery Spirit, which can be used to launch special attacks and boost Jirō's speed.

The game is divided in to chapters, which are further divided into days, each of which comprises one stage in the game. Each day can be tackled on one of three difficulty levels, and has a set number of packages that must be delivered. Additional bonus deliveries may appear during the stage, and some days will include boss fights that must be defeated before the final delivery can be made. The story is told through fully-voiced cut scenes made from sparsely-animated stills, which play at the beginning and end of each day.

Between stages, the player can use points earned on previous days to purchase upgrades for their van, including new engines, tires, and even frames. There are also a large number of hidden packages strewn about the city, which each unlock a bonus item in the menu when collected.

"mobygames.com"

5.5

Hoshi Furu

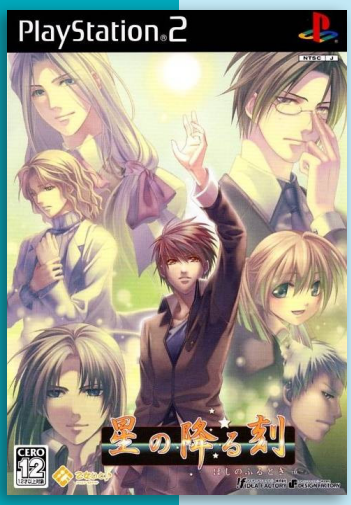
J

Developer	Piacci
Publisher	Piacci
Release date	(jp) July 31, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Hoshiful - Seitou Gakuen Tenmon Dokokai was originally released as an adult Japanese visual novel for PC DVD.

The player takes the role of Akira, a high school student. He belongs to an astronomy club and enjoys his school life with other members including Kotone, who he is in love with. Akira have to build up trust to make her his summer love.

Hoshi no Furu Toki



Developer	Idea Factory
Publisher	Idea Factory
Release date	(jp) September 22, 2005
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The game takes place in modern times and focuses on a second year female high school student, Akane Hasekura. Akane holds a special stone which was given to her seven years earlier by a beautiful lady, who immediately disappeared after handing the stone over. PLayers take the role of Akane, who's at the age where she starts to have feelings for boys. Due to her special stone, Akane finds herself in contact with many strange boys from her school. As players progress in the game, they'll work to develop a special relationship with one of the seven boys that appear in the game.

The game has two notable gameplay systems. The first, known as the Double Story System, involves a sudden change in the current game scenario, provided players fulfill certain conditions. The second system, known as the Ai Catch System, allows players to consult a chart which displays how each boy feels about them.

J

8.0

Hooligan: Kimi no Naka no Yuuki

J

Developer	Pacific Century Cyber Works
Publisher	Pacific Century Cyber Works
Release date	(jp) August 29, 2002
Genre	Visual novel, Card
Mode	1 Player

Hooligan - Kimi no Naka no Yuuki is a port of Hooligan, originally released for PC. The game is a superhero-comedy visual novel. The majority of the game consists of lightly-animated cutscenes and voiced dialogue, with occasional player choices that will branch the story and lead toward relationships with the various female characters. There are also several mini-games that occur throughout the game, most notably a simple card battle where the player must select cards to defeat the opposing characters in rock-paper-scissors style.

The PC version contains explicit sexual content, which was removed from the PS2 release. The PS2 version also contains fully-redone voice acting with a different cast.

6.5

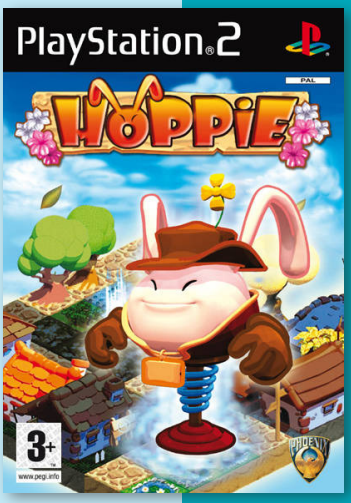
Hoppie

P

Developer	Phoenix Games
Publisher	Phoenix Games
Release date	(eu) 2006
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

In the game, players control Hoppie the bunny, and jump across levels filled with treasures and traps. Players can catch Holy Stars, Heaven Rings, and Power Gems to level up. Hoppie must break the evil spell cast on the entire kingdom before it fall into ruin.

As with several Phoenix games titles, Hoppie is a semi-rare game.



Hoshiiro no Okurimono

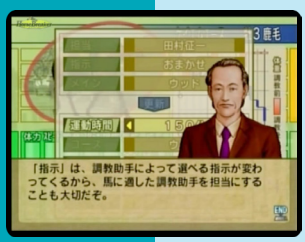
Developer	Takuyo
Publisher	Takuyo
Release date	(jp) November 8, 2007
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

The story is set in a school that will be torn down in a few months. This is announced to the player character, Akito Shin, a student of the school, some months before her graduation. She and her three school friend decide to start an astronomy club, so they can find the best starry sky and make some memories before their graduation.

J

7.5

Horse Breaker



J

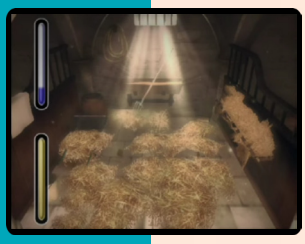
Developer	Koei, Inis
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) August 2, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 Player

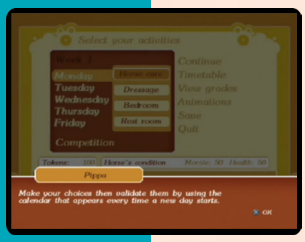
Horse Breaker is a horse breeding/racing simulation game for the PlayStation 2 developed and published by Koei. The game correspond to the 2001 JRA program.

Players can buy, train, and breed different horses that express difference in their personality.

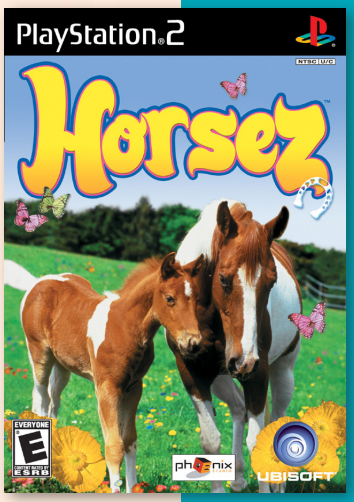
Horsez

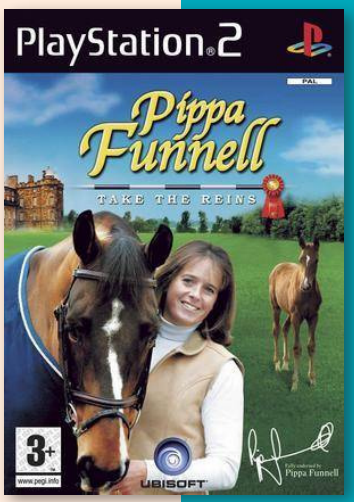
2.1





Developer	MTO
Publisher	Ubisoft
Release date	(eu) October 27, 2006
Genre	Simulation
Mode	1-4 Players





Horsez, also released as Pippa Funnell: Take the Reins, and Alexandra Ledermann: School of Champions, is a horse riding simulation game. The game is named after famous horse riders: Pippa Funnell (Great Britain) and Alexandra Ledermann (France), and is part of a series of games. The game is the sequel to Champion Dreams: First to Ride and is also part of the second series of Petz.

In Horsez, players take the role of Flora (this is the default name), a new member of the Sycamore Academy. Players can select a horse from one of 5 breeds and a range of colours. The player trains their horse in different disciplines, enters shows, cares for their horse, and after a few weeks gains a foal to raise.

In Take The Reins, Pippa Funnell is the champion who the player character aspire to be.

The player can choose from 5 breeds: Arabian Thoroughbred, English Thoroughbred, Connemara, Appaloosa and Saddlebred. Each breed has a range of colours including a number of shades of brown, bay and grey.

Players have to arrange their timetable so that they can pass each week. To pass, they must obtain a certain score out of 10 for each of the disciplines, and must train in that discipline at least twice a week. The disciplines are Horse Care, Cross Country, Dressage, Showjumping, and later Foal Care and Learning. Players must also have a high social rating, which is obtained by spending time in the Student Centre talking to other academy riders, performing well in disciplines, taking and displaying photographs in the Student Centre, and purchasing items from the shops. Between training and caring for the horse, foal, and talking to the other riders, players may go shopping, change their attire in the bedroom, study in the library and go for a walk with their horse. In each country, there are a number of secrets to find. These are small figurines, and there are 10 in total.

There are numerous cutscenes, events where the player character has to find something and riddles.

Hoshigari Empusa

7.0

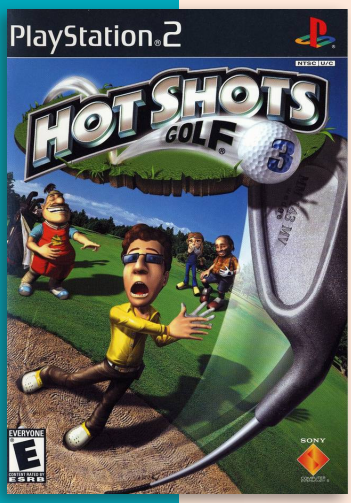
Developer	Takuyo
Publisher	Takuyo
Release date	(jp) April 17, 2008
Genre	Simulation, Board
Mode	1-4 Players

Hoshigari Empusa (lit. “An Avaricious Empusa”) is a boardgame rather than a typical visual-novel adventure game, where players are trying to win the school election by getting more total fame than the opponent in fifty turns. The ways to gain fame are by aquiring squares on the board or completing events. The game feature one to four players.

“psxdatacenter.com”

Hot Shots Golf 3

8.5



Developer	Clap Hanz
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) July 26, 2001
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-4 Players

Everybody’s Golf 3, known as Hot Shots Golf 3 in North America, is the third game in the Everybody’s Golf series and the first game released for the PlayStation 2.

The overall look and feel of the game is pretty much the same as it’s predecessors, taking the PS2’s extra power into account. The same ‘tap-tap-tap’ system for hitting the ball is back.

There are a number of different courses, characters, clubs, and ball types to choose from. New equipment can be purchased with experience points, which the player characters earn by winning matches. Better equipment will ease up the games difficulty a bit by providing greater accuracy, distance, and control.

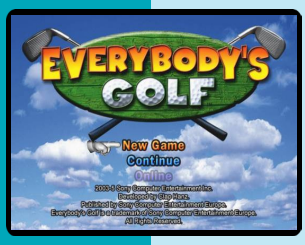
As an addition feature, the game has an international ranking system of sorts. With a password from the game players can post their scores on a website, where they can see how they measure up against everyone else out there.

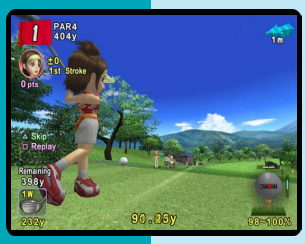
Everybody’s Golf 3 received positive reviews from critics. It received a score of 85.78% on GameRankings and 85/100 on Metacritic.

By July 2006, Everybody’s Golf 3 had sold 800,000 copies and earned $22 million in the United States.

Hot Shots Golf Fore!

8.0





Developer	Clap Hanz
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA, (eu) SCEE, (ko) SCE Korea
Release date	(jp) November 27, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-4 (50) Players

J N P

Everybody's Golf 4, known as Everybody's Golf in Europe and Hot Shots Golf Fore! in North America, is the fourth game in the Everybody's Golf series and the second released for PlayStation 2.

This game delivers more realistic physics, sharper graphics, more golfers, caddies and courses than before. Miniature golf games and online play for players with the Network Adaptor are also driving features. The developers increased the overall number of characters from 15 to 24, added more caddies (10 in all) and boosted the number of courses from six to 15. Of these 15 courses, 10 are new, while five are returning favorites from the previous game. The game also features a Tournament mode where up to 32 players can compete against each other. Cameo roles as playable characters in the North American and European versions are Ratchet (from the Ratchet & Clank series) and Jak (from the Jak and Daxter series). Ratchet and Jak's caddies are Clank and Daxter, respectively. A Pipo Monkey (from the Ape Escape series) is an unlockable caddie in the Japanese and European versions only. The European version seems to have the largest character roster overall.

The game implements the "Everybody's Points" system where players earn and spend points to unlock new gear and extras. Several different modes of play are available and include Tour (full season of tournaments), Tournament (plug and play instant action mode), VS Mode (challenge golfers to unlock new characters/costumes) and Training (in game tutorial mode). In addition, there are two online play modes: Head to Head (one on one play with another player) and Real Time Tournament (real time online golf tourneys). The North American and European versions included online play while Japanese did not.

One unique feature is an unlockable "Advanced Mode" that allows players to golf without the grid showing where the ball is expected to land when taking a shot or putting. This grid is typically used in golfing video games.

9.0

Hot Shots Golf Online

Developer	Clap Hanz
Publisher	SCEI, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) June 12, 2003
Genre	Sports
Mode	1 (-4) Players

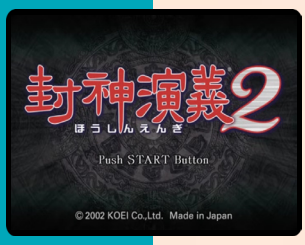
Minna no Golf Online takes the popular Clap Hanz title online. Golfers can play with up to four players on select courses as well as socialize in pre-game lobbies. Avatars can be personalized. A monthly fee applies.

In addition to the main online component, a single or two player mode is also available.

"mobygames.com"

9.0

Houshin Engi 2



Developer	Fu-Qi
Publisher	Koei
Release date	(jp) June 27, 2002
Genre	Role-playing
Mode	1 Player

Fengshen Yanyi 2 is the sequel to Fengshen Yanyi and the first title of the series to be converted into 3D. While the game still retains its RPG elements, it acts more like an action title with Warriors inspired gameplay. It was going to be localized in the west as Fengshen Yanyi: Legends of Gods and Heroes, but plans seem to have been dropped.

Throughout the game, the player may only control the main protagonist, Ziya. Other party members follow his commands and movements in the world map and battle segments. His death during the game's story means the end of the game.

After one complete playthrough of the game, a Bonus section can be unlocked at the start screen. It includes a movie and music gallery.

The main party can be controlled by moving around a world map from an overhead, birds-eye-view perspective. A total of five characters can be within the active party at any time, though Ziya has to be within each party combination.

Battles take place within their designated areas separate from the field screen. Monsters attack the party randomly on the world map or are visible on the world map as mandatory encounters.

"koei.wikia.com"

Koei the Best

7.0

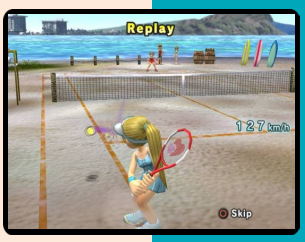
Hot Shots Tennis

J N P

Developer	Clap Hanz
Publisher	SCEI, (ko) SCEK, (eu) SCEE, (au) SCEA, (us) SCEA
Release date	(jp) September 14, 2006
Genre	Sports
Mode	1-2 (4) Players

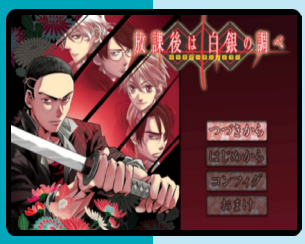
Everybody's Tennis, Hot Shots Tennis in North America, is the sixth game in the Everybody's Golf series and the third released for PlayStation 2.

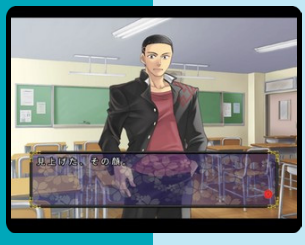
The game has 14 characters, 5 umpires, and 11 tennis courts. There are 3 different modes to choose from, which are Challenge Mode, Tennis with Everybody, and Training Mode. In Challenge, players play against computer-controlled opponents in order to unlock things like alternate costumes for characters and more courts to play on. In Tennis with Everybody, they can play matches with one to four players. The training mode lets players practice positioning and timing shots. Players can choose from service, volley, smash and general practices in this mode.



Few of the characters from the previous games of the series (both American and Japanese) make cameo appearances on the courts (usually only in Singles matches). Suzuki and Gloria return as being playable characters.

Houkago wa Gin no Shirabe

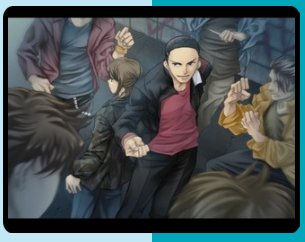




J

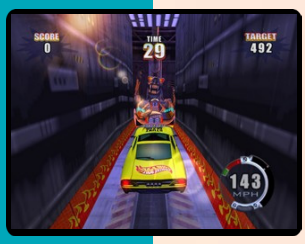
Developer	Dimple Entertainment
Publisher	Dimple Entertainment
Release date	(jp) February 28, 2008
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Houkago wa Gin no Shirabe is a visual novel released for the PC and Playstation 2. In the game players takes the role of Kagurasaka Kaname, that is from a family of exorcists. Her mission in the game is to find out the origins of the supernatural phenomenons that are happening in a school. The school confessed that the students have been seeing strange things and have been suffering petty injuries. Although they are nothing big, but for the school's reputation, they have to stop the mysterious incidents. Since the case is nothing serious, and Kaname is at the right age, she is sent to deal with it. There is only one problem, though, Kaname is a girl and the school is a boy's school.



"psxdatacenter.com"

6.2



N P

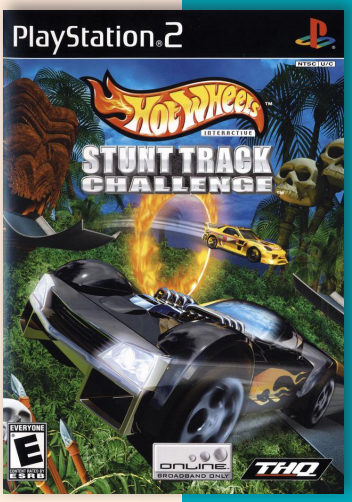
Hot Wheels Stunt Track Challenge

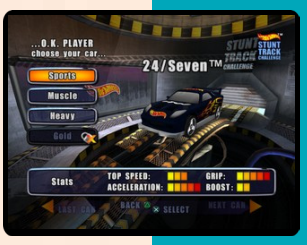
Developer	Climax Group
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) November 10, 2004
Genre	Action, Racing
Mode	1 (-6) Players

Hot Wheels: Stunt Track Challenge was released on PlayStation 2, Xbox, Game Boy Advance, and Microsoft Windows. It is the ninth instalment in the Hot Wheels series of video games.

Stunt Track Challenge is a stuntman style arcade game that consists of drivers competing in stunt challenges and winning fast races to stay on the show. Sometimes, there are mini games with special tasks, usually involving collecting icons in a limited amount of time.

Hot Wheels: Stunt Track Challenge received "mixed" reviews on all platforms according to Metacritic. Juan Castro of IGN gave the game 6.5 out of 10, and Alex Navarro of GameSpot gave Stunt Track Challenge 5.9 out of 10.





Hot Wheels: Beat That!

Developer	Eutechnyx
Publisher	Activision
Release date	(us) September 25, 2007
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Hot Wheels: Beat That! is a racing game based on the Hot Wheels toy line which manufactured by Mattel. The game was developed by Eutechnyx and published by Activision. It was released for Xbox 360, Windows, PS2, Nintendo DS, and Wii. The game was planned for release on PS3, Xbox, GameCube and Game Boy Advance, but these releases were cancelled.

The game features 3 events of racing in single player, 30 authentically modeled vehicles and 2 unplayable vehicles, two-player gameplay, competitive weaponry and power-ups. The player proceed to race through a bedroom, mini golf, attic and a bowling alley. New events and cars can be unlocked by winning an event or achieving the 2 secondary goals for each event.

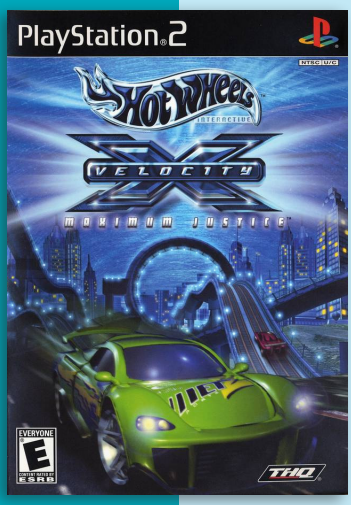
The game was not well received by critics, but well by fans.

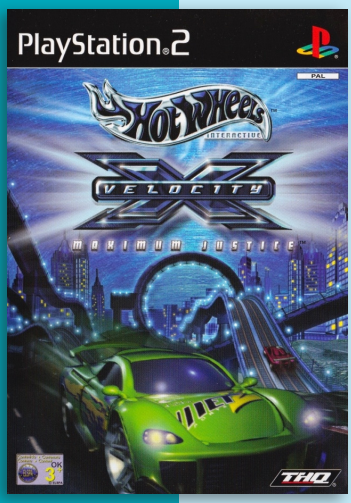
4.2

N P

Hot Wheels Velocity X

5.4





Developer	Beyond Games
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) November 11, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Hot Wheels Velocity X features 11 different gadgets and 5 different worlds - Monument City, Turbine Sands, Crankshaft Bay, Burnout Glacier and Underworld.

In the main Adventure mode, the player has to beat all 14 missions, while completing tasks in each one. These tasks vary from destroying a few vehicles, collecting items, racing/battling a boss, and more. The game's missions take place across 5 different locations, with three missions in each world, except for the final world, which only has 2 missions.

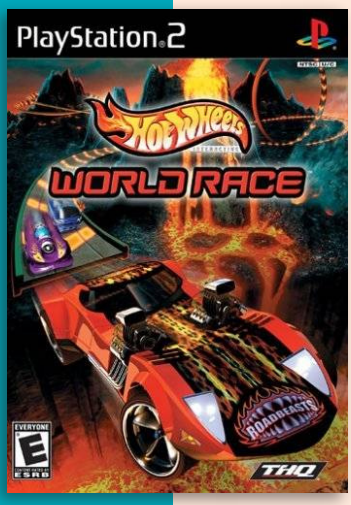
In the Challenge mode, the player has to complete all 18 challenges. Each Challenge comes with various tasks, such as achieving "x" Stunt points, collecting "x" gears, or reaching the finish before the clock hits 00:00. Along the way, new vehicles as well as new race/battle maps and weapons are unlocked.

The game also has a Drag Race mode, a Battle mode, and a Joyride mode. The Drag Race and Battle modes are both single-player and multi-player. The Joyride, in essence, is free roam. The player can also unlock cars in Joyride by collecting all ten gears or finding the hidden key in each map.

N P

Hot Wheels World Race

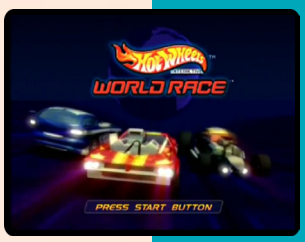
5.5



Developer	Climax Group
Publisher	THQ
Release date	(us) October 29, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Hot Wheels: World Race is a racing game based on the television series of the same name.

The gameplay of World Race is similar to many other racing games. Players can do special tricks when in the air, which adds on to the players' car's boost. Collecting gold rings also increases the boost. The game also feature a multi-player, which are split-screen.



N P

Hresvelgr

5.3

Developer	Gust
Publisher	Gust
Release date	(jp) June 22, 2000
Genre	Racing
Mode	1 Player

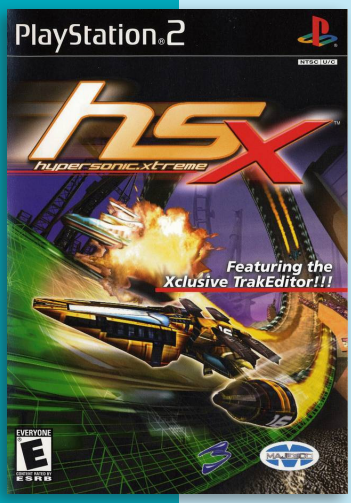
Hresvelgr is a futuristic racing game set in 2040. The players airships are equipped with weapons they can use to knock the opponents speed down or bump them from the course.

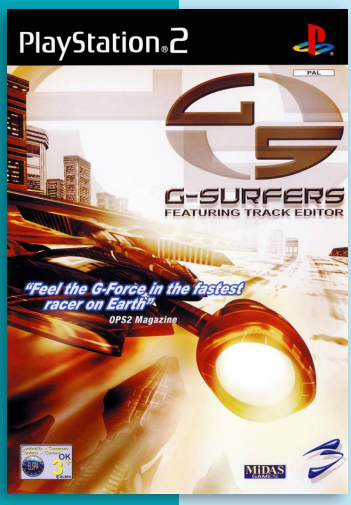
Released only in Japan, the game was rereleased six months later with various fixes and additions as Hresvelgr: International Edition - which was then picked up by Ubisoft for the European market and published as Jet-Ion GP.

"psxdatacenter.com"

HSX HyperSonic.Xtreme

5.3





Developer	Blade Interactive
Publisher	Midas Interactive Entertainment, (us) Majesco
Release date	(eu) January 25, 2002
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

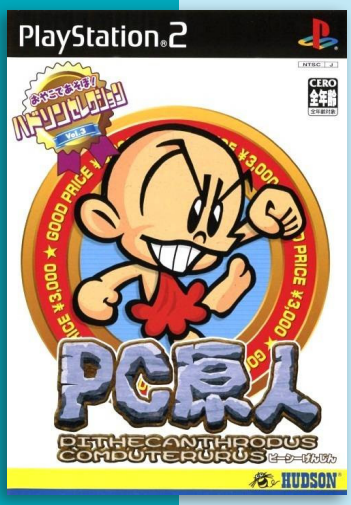
G-Surfers is a futuristic racing game released in Europe on January 25, 2002 by Midas Interactive Entertainment. On January 28, 2003 in the United States, it was released by Majesco Entertainment and slightly altered under the title HSX: Hypersonic.Xtreme.

The game features 30 tracks, and 15 crafts; however, when the first six races are available, the player must complete the game to unlock more tutorials and tracks. It also features "TrakEdit", a mode allowing players to create their own tracks using various objects. Tutorials guide the player to this mode. A two-player split screen mode is included in the game, as well as the Time Trial and Cup racing modes for one player. The player should choose a craft they like to use in the game, and then go through five series (each including six tracks). Players must finish at first, second or third place to win. If they successfully completed a series, they unlocks more material. Despite the tracks incorporating twists, turns, loops, corkscrews and jumps, various obstacles are considered avoidable for them. In addition, there are the boost and health icons throughout each track.

The influence of the game was taken from F-Zero and the Wipeout video game series, resulting in a very similar game and negative reviews.

Hudson Selection Vol. 3: PC Genjin

8.2



Developer	Hudson Soft
Publisher	Hudson
Release date	(jp) December 4, 2003
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

Hudson Selection Vol. 3: PC Genjin is a remake of PC Genjin (Bonk's Adventure), as the third game out of four in the Hudson Selection series of game remakes.

While the game remains mostly the same as the original, the graphics and sound have been completely overhauled. The graphics are fully 3D rendered and are similar in design to Yoshi's Story. Bonk has a meaner look and practically every sound effect is spelled out on-screen. Some of the levels are altered. Fruit is not as common and there are no crystal hearts, but lives are much more plentiful.

There are three difficulty levels, which after being fully completed, unlock the three original PC Genjin Japanese TV commercials.

"mobygames.com"

Hudson Selection Vol. 4: Takahashi Meijin no Bouken Jima

8.1

Developer	Hudson
Publisher	Hudson
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2003
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

Hudson Selection Vol. 4: Takahashi Meijin no Bōken Jima is a budget remake of the side-scrolling platform game, Adventure Island, for the GameCube and PlayStation 2.

The story starts out with Master Higgins and his girlfriend relaxing until a purple cloud takes his girlfriend away to King Quiller. So it's up to Master Higgins to go and rescue her.

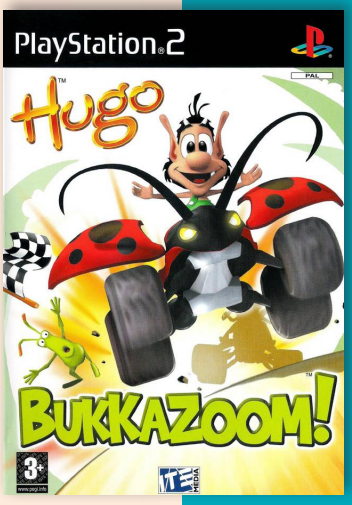
This remake is different from the original in that the graphics were rendered to 3D, the music was completely overhauled, the bosses do more things than throw their weapons at Master Higgins, and this remake contains bonus materials.

"mobygames.com"

Hugo Bukkazoom!

7.0

Developer	ITE Media
Publisher	ITE Media
Release date	(eu) November 28, 2003
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

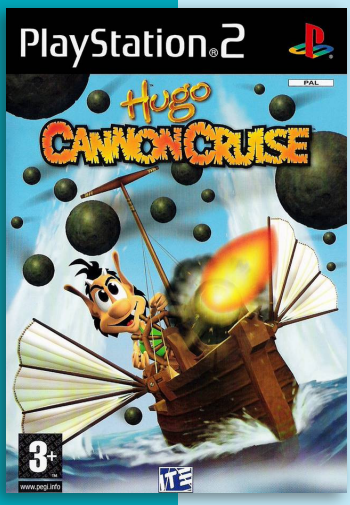


Hugo: Bukkazoom! is a 3D racing game based starring Hugo the TV Troll, a popular cartoon character on Danish television.

In this game Hugo is shrunk to the size of little green creatures called greenflies. He must race a kart through marshes, deserts and various landscapes. The circuits have checkpoints, upgrades and a scoring system open to different possible strategies. Both single-player and multiplayer games for up to two players are supported. Included game modes are balloon race, greenflies in basket, regular races, capture the balloon, taxi race, free roam and time trial. There are different characters to choose from and they can use power-ups during the races, such as a shield, a cluster bomb or a turbo.

"mobygames.com"

Hugo Cannon Cruise



Developer	NDS Software
Publisher	NDS Software
Release date	Action, Shooter
Genre	(eu) November 3, 2004
Mode	1-2 Players

5.0

Hugo: Cannon Cruise is a 3D shooting game starring Hugo the TV troll in a nautical adventure.

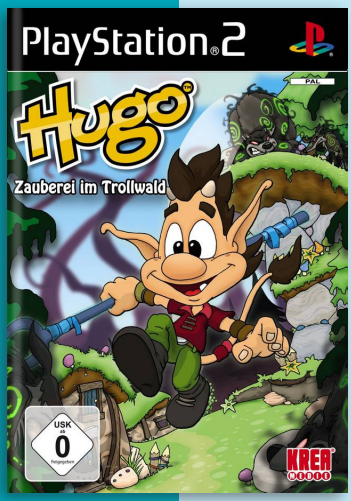
In long forgotten times Iduna the witch queen planted a magical tree. This tree is located in her tomb and each thousand years one apple grows from this tree, granting the first to eat from it three wishes. Scylla the evil witch is after the apple now, but to get in she has to raise all statues of Iduna's sisters from the sea floor, to break the tomb's magical seal. Scylla has send messages to all her allies to help her.

Players take control of Hugo and his ship. Gameplay includes sailing around and destroying various enemy ships and towers with the cannon. Enemies include Vikings, Romans and pirates that try to prevent Hugo from reaching the tomb. Destroyed ships sometimes drop additional ammo and extra health.

"mobygames.com"

Hugo: Magic In The Troll Woods

5.8



Developer	Attractive Games
Publisher	Rough Trade
Release date	(eu) November 27, 2009
Genre	Action-platformer
Mode	1 Player

In this game, humans start to clear the forest, and the root of all evil is uncovered and threatens both their world and the magical creatures that live in the forest. Hugo the troll is a magician in training and is entrusted by the animal elders with the sacred Elder's Staff to combat the evil.

Hugo: Magic in the Troll Woods, also released in Germany as Hugo: Zauberei im Trollwald, is a 3D platformer where players control Hugo as he jumps, slides, climbs and swings through the forest while collecting hidden items and solving puzzles. The evil has transformed some forest animals into shadow creatures that must be combated and restored.

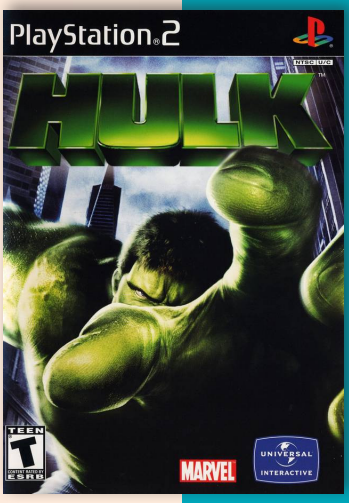
"mobygames.com"

P

Hulk

7.1

J N P



Developer	Radical Entertainment
Publisher	Universal Interactive, (jp) CyberFront
Release date	(us) May 27, 2003
Genre	Beat-'em-up
Mode	1 Player

Hulk is a sequel based on the movie of the same name. The game is set eight years after the ending of the film, with players taking the role of Dr. Bruce Banner and his alter ego, The Hulk. After fighting his way through the first year of his new identity, Bruce and The Hulk must now face a new enemy, The Leader, who wants to use the same gamma technology that created The Hulk in Bruce to develop an army of giants.

A signature feature has Eric Bana reprise his role of Bruce Banner.

Levels in the game have players controlling either Bruce or The Hulk. Bruce must use his smaller size to sneak around areas 'Splinter Cell' style, while The Hulk can bash and blast his way through enemy territory in every way possible, with over 40 different attacks to use.

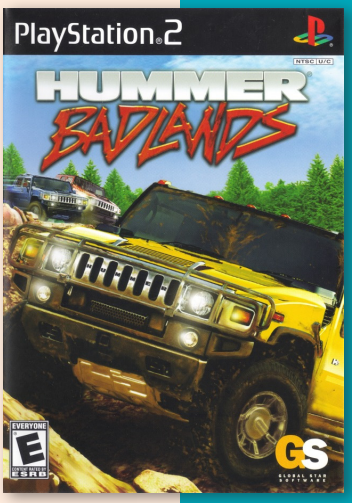
Hulk received mixed reviews, but the overall response from critics, players and fans was positive.

Hummer Badlands

4.8

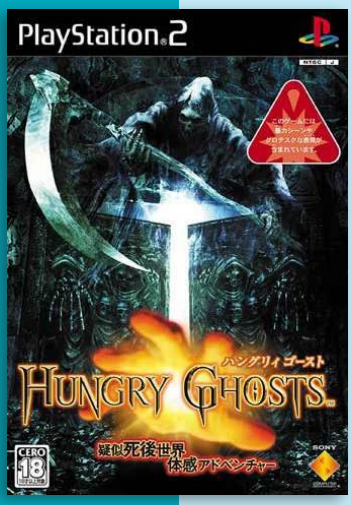
Developer	Eutechnyx
Publisher	Global Star Software, (eu) 2K Games
Release date	(us) April 13, 2006
Genre	Racing
Mode	1-2 Players

Hummer Badlands is a racing game developed by Eutechnyx. Players can drive and choose from 19 different hummer models, as they race to win in different races through all the modes of the game: Championship, Tug'O'war, and Extreme Off-road where they race to the top of a mountain through intense weather over fallen trees and tall grass. As players win, they unlock custom hummers, tracks, and customizations to upgrade their vehicle.



Hungry Ghosts

7.7

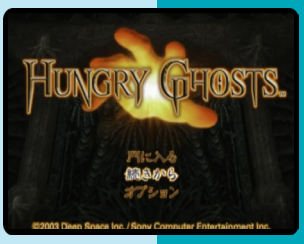


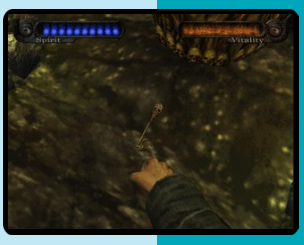
Developer	Deep Space
Publisher	SCEI
Release date	(jp) July 31, 2003
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

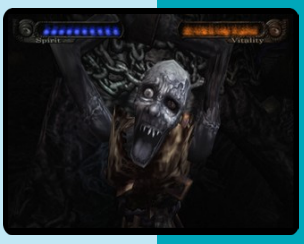
In this game, the player character start of dead. In his life, he were a warrior who took many other lives. But now, his own life at its end. At the River Styx, Death tells him that he have a choice. He can let his soul be carried off to Hell, or he can attempt to be accepted at the Gate of Judgment, proving himself worthy of being reborn as a human.

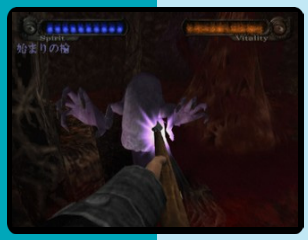
Hungry Ghosts is a first-person adventure game with light action elements. The player controls the recently-deceased warrior as he travels through the afterlife searching for the Gate of Judgment. Many objects can be examined, collected, or interacted with in various ways. The protagonist begins the game with a spear and an empty crossbow, but can acquire and use a number of other weapons and items throughout the game. It is necessary to collect so-called Soul Fragments by helping out other lost souls, which will allow the player to progress through the next gate.

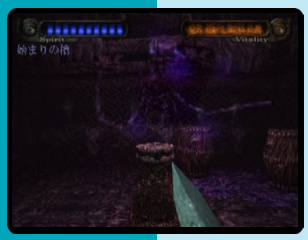
Every action in the game has an effect on the protagonist's fate. Simply reaching the Gate of Judgment is not enough to redeem him; the player will be judged accordingly on the actions they took to get there. In order to be judged fit for rebirth, the player must be judicious in their choices; take only what is necessary, help out others wherever possible, and do not cause undue suffering.





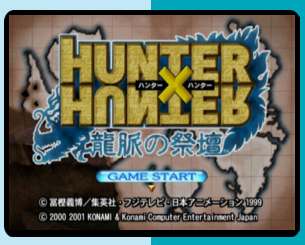






Hunter X Hunter: Ryumyaku no Saidan

6.4



Developer	KCEJ
Publisher	Konami
Release date	(jp) August 30, 2001
Genre	Action
Mode	1 Player

Hunter X Hunter is a sidecrolling beat-em-up based on the manga by Yoshihiro Togashi. Many characters from the Hunter X Hunter universe are playable in the game.

The game is game to Chocobo Dungeon games in which the player controls Gon and a partner and have to explore different levels defeating all the enemies to advance to other levels.

J

Hyakko: Yorozuya Jikenbo!

8.6

J

Developer	5pb
Publisher	5pb
Release date	(jp) April 9, 2009
Genre	Visual novel
Mode	1 Player

Hyakko: Yorozuya Jikenbo! is a visual novel adventure game with a high school setting. It features four lead characters from the same-named anime, with the same voice-actresses from the anime. While main protagonist is Torako Kageyama, the story is told from the perspective of all four characters. Aside from Torako, that includes Tatsuki Iidzuka, Suzume Saotome, and Ayumi Nonomura.

The story revolves around the four high school girls stumbling upon a room in school that is said to belong to a group called Yorozuya (Eng. Jack of all trades). Members of that group, apparently, focus on looking for lost things, helping people and doing other detective-like work. Torako gets attracted to that group and along with her friends becomes a member of Yorozuya group. There, the boss of the group presents them with a task to test their abilities.

The Limited Edition box contains the Hyakko: Yorozuya Jikenbo! game, an Metallic disc case for 20 discs and an Original soundtrack CD.

Limited Edition

HYAKKO ヒャッコ ようずや事件簿！

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR DEATH.

IT WAITS FOR YOU.

HUNTER THE RECKONING WAYWARD

COMING SOON – RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW

huntersthereckoning.com/wayward

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Strong Lyrics
Violence

DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE SOFTWARE

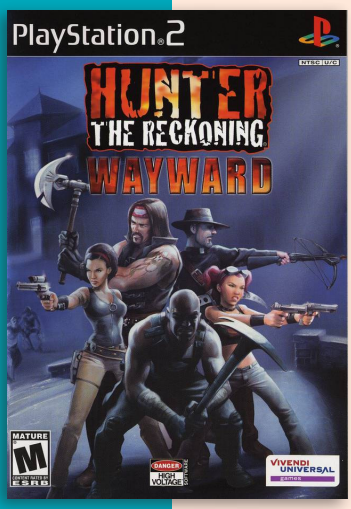
VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games

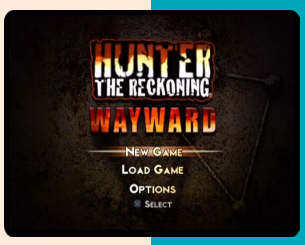
PlayStation 2

Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward for the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system © 2003 Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. All rights reserved. AtlasTech Game Engine trademark 2000 High Voltage Software, Inc. All rights reserved. Developed for Vivendi Universal Games, Inc., by High Voltage Software, Inc. under license from White Wolf Publishing, Inc. White Wolf and Hunter: The Reckoning are registered trademarks of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. High Voltage and the High Voltage logo are registered trademarks of High Voltage Software, Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. Vivendi Universal Games and the Vivendi Universal Games Logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other copyrights and trademarks are property of their respective owners.

Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward

6.8





Developer	High Voltage Software
Publisher	Vivendi Games, (eu) Sierra Entertainment
Release date	(us) September 9, 2003
Genre	Beat-'em-up
Mode	1-2 Players

Hunter: The Reckoning: Wayward is the sequel to Hunter: The Reckoning and based on the Hunter: The Reckoning role-playing game.

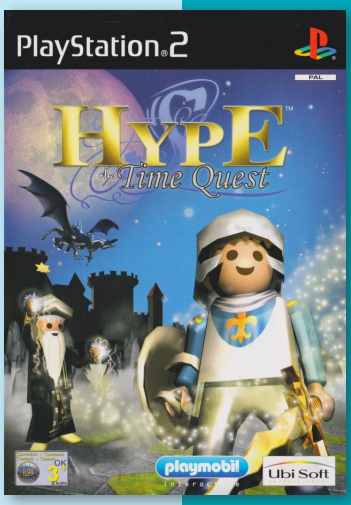
The one or two-player game allows the player(s) to pick among five unique Hunters and battle the undead in Ashcroft using a variety of weapons and special powers called Edges.

N P

Hype: The Time Quest

7.6

P



Developer	Ubisoft
Publisher	Ubisoft
Release date	(eu) September 20, 2002
Genre	Action-adventure
Mode	1 Player

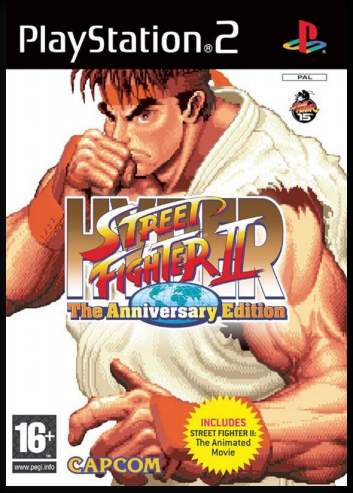
The story begins during King Taskan IV's reign, following the end of a civil war. The valiant warrior Hype is given the Sword of Peace for his heroic deeds and his loyalty to the throne. However, a mysterious black knight named Barnak appears and casts a powerful spell on Hype, turning him into a statue and sending him two hundred years into the past. The magician Gogoud brings Hype back to life, and the brave knight has to figure out a way to return to his own time, defeat Barnak, and marry his sweetheart Vibe.

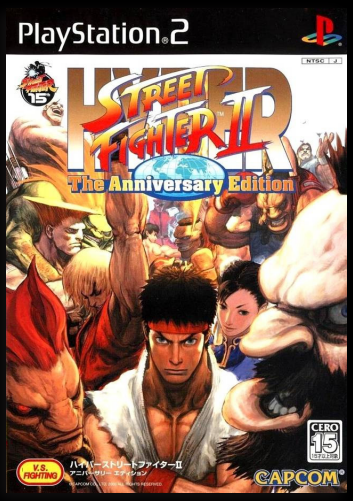
Based on the medieval castle toy series from Playmobil, Hype: The Time Quest is an action game with puzzle-solving and light role-playing elements, similar in style to 3D installment of the Zelda series. Hype primarily fights with close-range weapons, though he can also cast offensive spells in three elemental categories. Hostile areas occupy the largest portion of the game; Hype will explore dungeons, face boss monsters, and will have to hunt for quest items needed to advance the story. Some of the puzzles revolve around time-traveling concept.

The game was directed by Alain Tascan and featured thirty-two different voice actors, as well as original music by Robbi Finkel.

8.0

Hyper Street Fighter II: The Anniversary Edition





Special Anniversary Pack (jp)

J P

Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Release date	(jp) December 18, 2003
Genre	Fighting
Mode	1-2 Players

Released to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Street Fighter series, Hyper Street Fighter II is a modified port of Super Street Fighter II Turbo in which players can control any versions of the main characters from the five Street Fighter II games previously released for the arcades.

The opening sequence has been altered to use a modified version of the Super Street Fighter II intro, in which logos of the past five games appear flashing into the screen.

Once the game is started, the player has to select a game speed, and then they are asked to choose one of the five Street Fighter II games, which will limit the selectable characters to the roster of the selected game.

"Normal" features the eight characters from the original Street Fighter II. If both players choose this version of the game, mirror matches will not be allowed, as the original game did not support them, even lacking different character color palettes.

"Champ" ("Dash" in the Japanese version) is based on Street Fighter II′: Champion Edition and adds the four Grand Masters as playable fighters.

"Turbo" is based on Street Fighter II′ Turbo: Hyper Fighting.

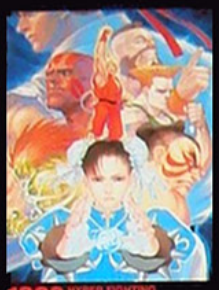
"Super" adds the four new characters from Super Street Fighter II.

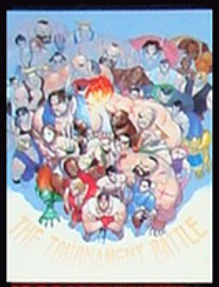
"Super T" ("Super X" in the Japanese version), is based on Super Street Fighter II Turbo and adds Akuma.

This selection determines all the characteristics the chosen character originally had in the selected game, from the set of moves and animation frames, to its voice and portrait picture. This leads to a roster of 17 unique characters with a total 65 different character variations.

The North American version was released in a two-in-one disc titled Street Fighter Anniversary Collection, which also features Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike.

CAPCOM®





—確かに熱かった、
あの黄金の瞬間よ。

HYPER STREET FIGHTER II
The Anniversary Edition

© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003, 2004 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

ハイパーストリートファイターII アニバーサリー エディション

オレ達の闘いは
終わらない。

PS2
PlayStation2